







JOHN'S ALIVE — WM. TAPPAN THOMPSON — BALTIMORE 1846







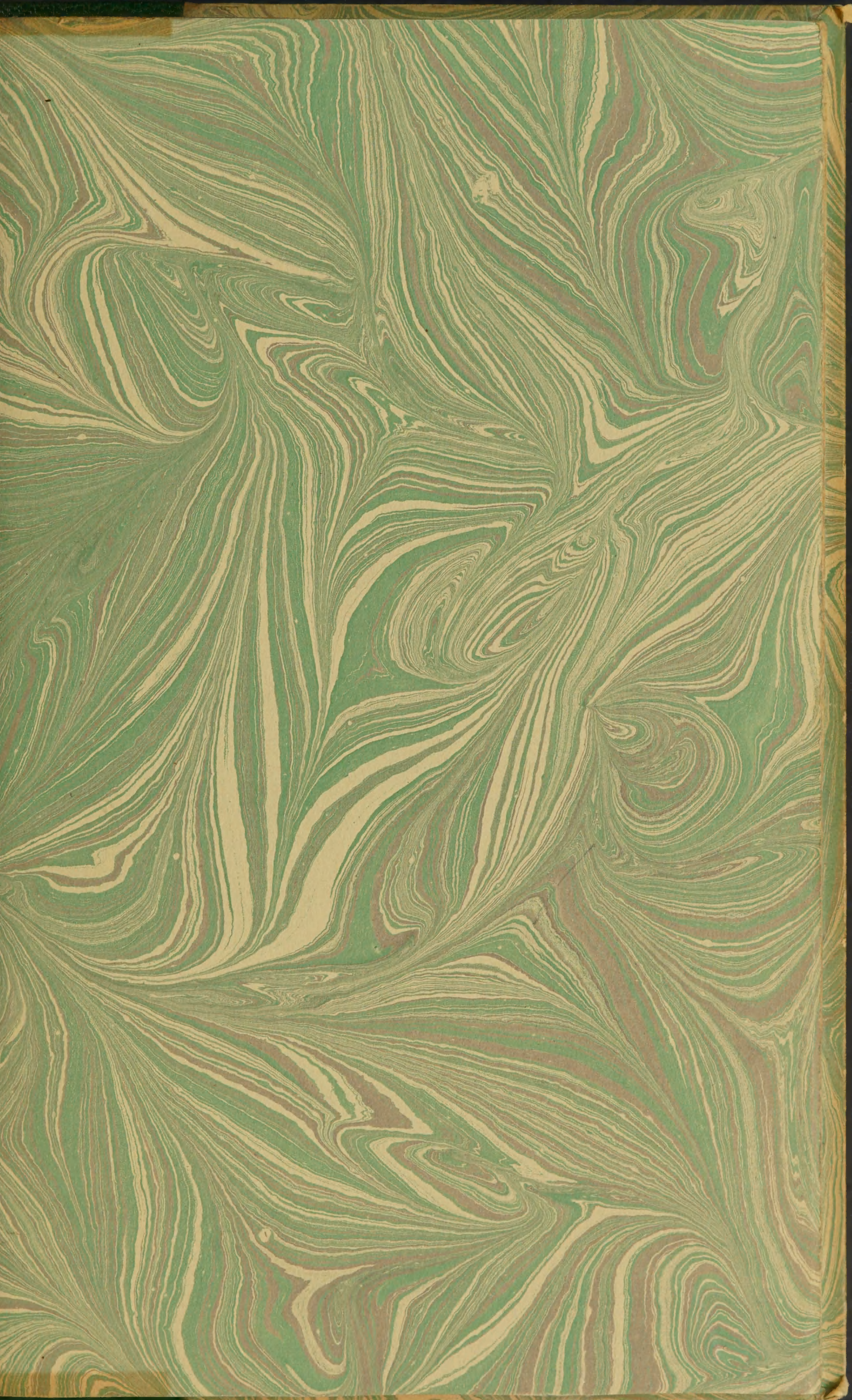














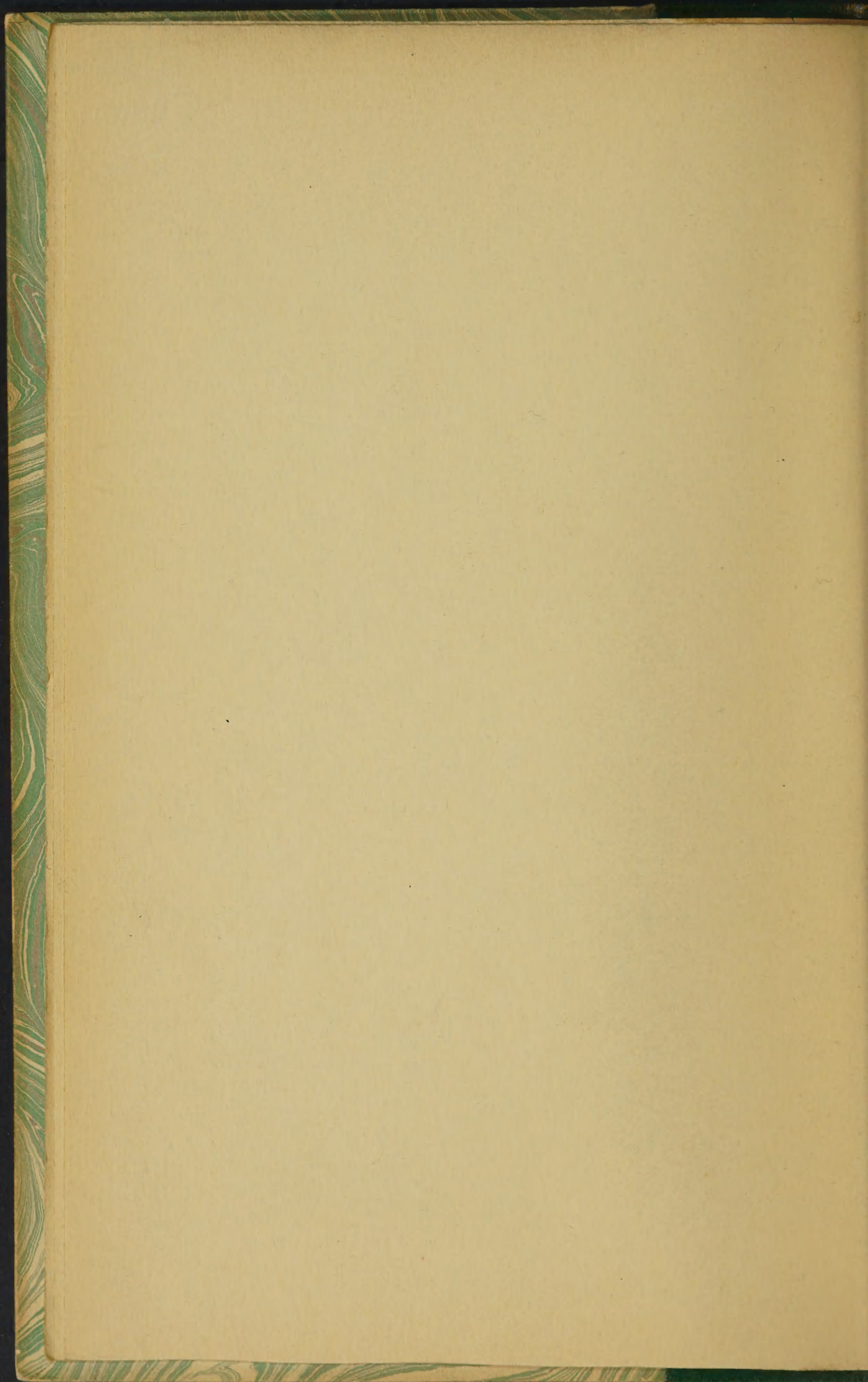
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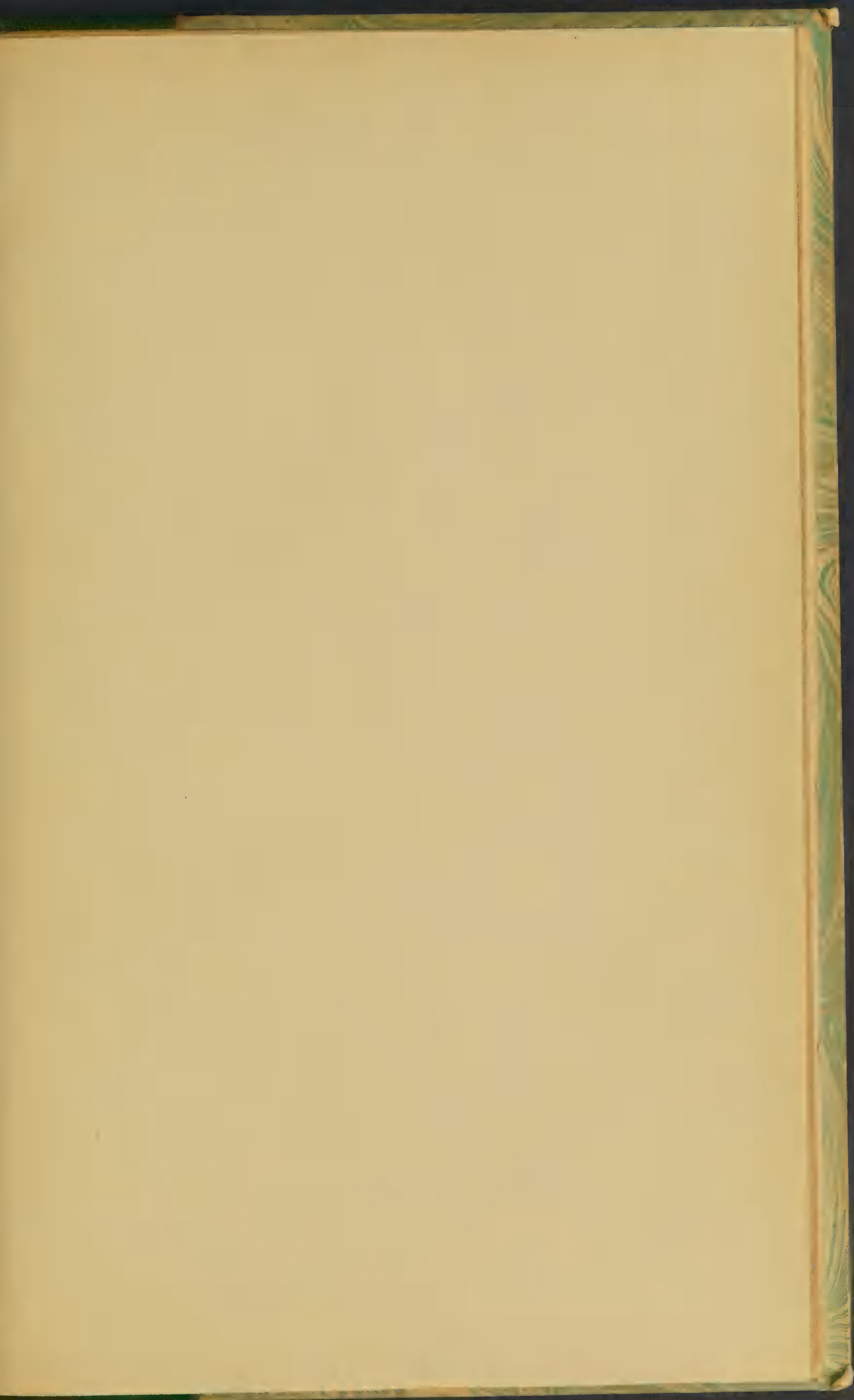
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*Thompson, William F.*

JOHN'S ALIVE;

OR,

THE BRIDE OF A GHOST.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"MAJOR JONES' COURTSHIP," "CHRONICLES OF PINEVILLE,"  
&c. &c. &c.

BALTIMORE:  
TAYLOR, WILDE AND COMPANY,  
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# JOHN'S ALIVE;

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### CHAPTER I.

It is the custom of inventors of personal narrative to set out with a full and complete biographical sketch of the pretended author, often comprising a minute and particular detail of all the circumstances of his birth, parentage, and early history. And, while some writers, like the renowned Tristram Shandy, endeavor, by great particularity in the detail of remote causes, to explain the early bias of character, by far the greater number seem to be actuated only by a desire to throw the reader into a sort of magnetic sleep, in order that they may, in the outset, obtain entire mastery over his senses, and be the better able to conduct him through the regions of fancy which they are about to open to his view. Such are the arts practised by the ingenious inventors of fiction. But as I am neither a romancer nor a mesmerist—no traverser of the world of dreams for the edification of the credulous—but am prompted solely by the earnest desire of doing good to others, by exhibiting to the world the direful consequences resulting from the unrestrained indulgence of a rash, impetuous temper, I shall dispense with a formality which I conceive would add nothing to the character or interest of the following veritable history. And permitting my venerable ancestors to repose in the peaceful oblivion, to which mortality has long since consigned them, I shall proceed to cultivate an acquaintance with the reader on my own account, leaving



him to indulge his fancy, or fall asleep, if he will, over some subsequent chapter.

I do not deserve, nor do I expect, gentle reader, to escape your censure. I know that your good sense will often be shocked at my rashness and folly; and I take this early opportunity of putting in, as a plea in extenuation of my greatest foible—my stubborn waywardness of disposition—the fact that I was the only son of fond and far too indulgent parents, and that the sad experience and extraordinary vicissitudes, through which I have passed, were probably as necessary to teach me that degree of humility which should temper the disposition of every rational being, as are the training and chastening which others receive in early life, from their more discreet and well-judging guardians. Though you will doubtless feel constrained to condemn the spirit which prompted many of my acts, and the judgment which dictated others, I trust that you will concede, in the end, that I have abundantly atoned for my errors.

Before proceeding with my narrative, it will be necessary to premise, that I was born in Philadelphia, as that city of “Brotherly Love” is to be the theatre of much of my eventful history. With the reader’s permission—and I take it for granted—I will skip over a period of about sixteen years, during which time, as a matter of course, I passed through the various vicissitudes of babyhood, childhood, and boyhood; and, leaving the recollections of that happy period of my existence where they are, enshrined in the inmost recesses of my own heart amid the brightest memories of the past, I will commence my story at that period of my life, when the bitter waters of experience first became mingled with the sweet, sunny stream of my youthful hopes.

I had reached my seventeenth year, and not a single incident had occurred to cast a shadow upon the landscape of my existence. At that period, the prospect of the future was, as it ever is with youth, all bright and glowing—in the past there was nothing to regret, and the present was but the ecstasy of unalloyed enjoyment. But, ah, how little does he know, who trims his tiny sail upon the glossy tide, as he watches the gentle ripple of the placid stream playing in the sunbeam, of the wild tempest and rugged waves he is doomed to encounter in his voyage upon the ocean of life!

As I have said, I was in my seventeenth year when—I fell in love! Start not, gentle reader—for though love was the rock upon which I split, the catastrophe is more to be attributed to my own unskillful navigation, than to the dangers of the ocean upon which my barque was launched. It is an old saying, that “the course of true love never does run smooth.” The history of my affairs not only abundantly verifies the adage, but, as I think, affords a striking illustration of the cause; proving beyond a doubt, that much of the sin that is commonly set down to the account of the blind god, is more properly chargeable to those lovers themselves, whose gross natures are incapable of properly appreciating the divine passion, until the intoxication of its first in-



ception is somewhat subdued by the consequences of the follies they commit while under its influence.

My Julia was an object to love. In person, she was the very embodiment of youthful perfection—in mind, all I could desire—and in disposition, so kind, so confiding, so amiable! We had grown up together—our families had long been intimate, and, as she had no brother, I had, when we were children, filled the place of one in her regards, and now that we were older, that feeling had matured to a still more tender sentiment, and that sentiment was mutual. She became my idol—the theme of my constant thought—her society was my only enjoyment—I sought no other, and was only completely happy when in her presence; or when, in her absence, I cherished the fond belief that she felt towards me the same ardent, devoted attachment. Julia was but just entering her fifteenth year. She had not yet made her *entrée* into society, and of course had not inhaled the pestilential atmosphere of fashion. She knew not yet what it was to be admired—to be flattered—and her ingenuous heart had never counted the power of her superior charms, or throbbed to the emotion of female vanity.

Such was the gentle creature to whom I had plighted my faith, and from whom I had received a vow in return, to be none other's but mine. Is it to be wondered that I consecrated to her my whole heart? We were young—but we looked forward with bright anticipation to the period when our union was to be consummated; and when, arm in arm, we sauntered through Washington Square, or strolled by by the banks of the Schuylkill, beneath the bright moonlight, we spoke of the future with the same frankness with which we had plighted our mutual loves.

A year of such Elysian days passed speedily off; but we were now no longer children. We had made our *debut*, and as we yielded to the requirements of fashionable life in our deportment before the world, I did not fail to observe a material change in the character of my Julia. She not only became reserved in her deportment towards me when in company with others of her sex, but seemed, on such occasions, to receive my marked attentions with an air of triumph, and to delight, whenever opportunity presented, in awakening my suspicions of her fidelity. Such was my jealous nature, that I not unfrequently manifested my displeasure in public. Indeed, I was too selfish in my passions to allow her that freedom of action which her own good sense taught her she had a right to enjoy, and which prudence and common delicacy dictated that she should exercise. Frequently were my feelings wrought upon, when in truth there was but slight cause, and as often what are called "lover's quarrels," ensued between us—which, of course, as all such quarrels do, ended in renewed and common protestations of immutable attachment.

"John," said she, one evening, as we were returning from a musical party, which we had attended at Fair-Mount, "what makes you so serious?"



"Oh, nothing," I replied with a suppressed sigh, unwilling to disclose my thoughts.

"Ah, John, you are too jealous," said Julia with an ominous shake of her pretty head.

"Jealous! Oh, no, I'm not jealous in the least," I replied, really ashamed of the truth; "I'm the last man to be jealous, Julia. What makes you think so?"

"Why, you seemed so melancholy all the evening after I sung that duett with Mr. Shaw."

"Pshaw!—you only thought so—I'm sure that was nothing to be melancholy about."

"Yes you were—the girls all said so, and you don't know how they plagued me about it. They said you looked at him as if you would tear him to pieces."

"Well the fact is, I don't like that Shaw—he is such an impertinent fellow."

"But he sings beautifully, don't he?"

"I can't say that I admire his singing," I remarked, with affected indifference.

"And then he's so graceful and polite."

"He reminds me more of a ring-master in a circus, than a well-bred gentleman," replied I, with difficulty concealing my agitation, while I stole a glance beneath her bonnet, to see if she was in earnest.

"Well," said she with great gravity, "you'll not deny that he is very handsome."

That was too much! I could have strangled him had he been within my reach at that moment. It was not the first time that he had aroused my jealousy, and he had rendered himself peculiarly annoying to me during the past evening. Then to hear such compliments lavished upon him by her, was more than I could bear. We walked some distance before I could sufficiently master my feelings to utter a reply. Then, in a voice that betrayed my agitation, I remarked—

"Perhaps, Miss Julia, new faces appear to better advantage in your eyes than those that have grown familiar. It may do for faces, but I would advise you to adopt a different rule when you come to make a choice of hearts."

"Miss Julia!" she exclaimed, and turning her bright eyes to my face with an arch smile—"you're not jealous then—oh no, you're the last man to be jealous! Now what did I tell you, John? You *are* jealous, and of Mr. Shaw, a gentleman with whom I am scarce acquainted. Then assuming a softer and more serious tone, she continued, "John, do you think——"

"I didn't think you were in earnest," I interrupted, my respiration coming free and my heart leaping with glad emotion, as I pressed the little hand that had some how or other become locked in mine.

"Ah, John, you *were* jealous, and you ought to be——"

"I am convinced, my dear Julia, and——"

"You ought to be *ashamed*, I mean. Why the green-eyed



monster will eat you up before our wedding day, if there's any truth in Shakspeare."

I confessed the truth, but plead my ardent love for her in extenuation of my fault, and promised never to be jealous again. "But," I continued, "you must promise me that you will give no more encouragement to Shaw. He knows I despise him, and seeks to annoy me, by thrusting himself into your society."

"I must treat him with politeness, you know, so long as he is respectful to me. But as to any farther consideration from me, he has as little to hope as you have to fear."

Thus ended one of our many quarrels. We were soon at her father's residence, a neat little cottage near the upper end of Arch-street, and, as it was late, I parted with her at the door, and directed my steps homeward with a light heart, since I no longer regarded Beau Shaw as a rival in the affections of the angelic being I had just left.

But I was not long to enjoy the delightful calm to my fears which succeeded. The truth is, I had, by my own indiscretion, contributed to spoil one of the sweetest tempers that ever was perverted and ruined by admiration and flattery, and I now began to suffer the consequences of my folly. Julia *did* derive a secret pleasure from teasing me. Like most of her sex who possess any claim to personal beauty, she was not entirely destitute of vanity, and, like far too many, could not resist the temptation to gratify that vanity by testing the power of those charms, even at the cost of the severest inflictions upon my feelings. Many were the little coquetries and mischievous flirtations, to which she resorted, in order to exhibit the abject vassalage in which she held my affections; and many and severe were the tests to which her arts subjected me.

One evening not long after our Fair-Mount excursion, I accompanied Julia to the house of an acquaintance, where a company of young ladies and gentlemen were assembled. On entering the parlor, I was not a little annoyed at hearing the squeaking voice of Mr. Shaw, who was striding about the room, bowing and scraping, grinning and chattering, as if intent on monopolising the attention of all the ladies present. But I was still more vexed soon after by his incessant attentions to Julia, who, I thought, considering what had passed between us in relation to that gentleman, was entirely too affable in her encouragement of those attentions. It was not a dancing party, but one of those social evening assemblies, at which young people generally engage in unmeaning plays and romps, fit only for children, or pass the time in exchanging "small talk"—for neither of which amusements I had much relish; but, with a view of making myself as agreeable as possible, I adopted the latter as the choice of two evils. I, however, soon discovered my inability to entertain even Julia, while Mr. Shaw was the master of ceremonies. He was perfectly *au fait* in all the little games usually performed on such occasions, and introduced many new fooleries, much to



the gratification of the company. And then he was such a ready poet, and could rattle off such jingle as

"Well, here I be,  
Under this tree—  
Miss Julia C.  
Come and kiss me;"

in a style so peculiarly his own; and he always had something so witty to whisper in the ladies' ears, and made such rare comparisons, that he soon became "the observed of all observers," totally eclipsing every other gallant in the room. Julia was not slow to observe my discontent. A single look of reproach from me, and a few of her new admirer's compliments, sufficed to excite her vanity; and encouraged by Mr. Shaw, she had in the course of the evening wrought me up to such a pitch of jealousy, that it was with difficulty I could restrain my emotion in the presence of the company.

As it grew late, and after the usual amusements had been exhausted, the company became seated round the room. Conversation was flagging, when Mr. Shaw, in the exuberance of his inventive genius, struck upon a novel plan of entertaining the company for an hour longer.

"Ladies," said he, "I presume you have not heard of the new science, called the Daguerreotype. I can assure you that it is a very wonderful art, by which we are enabled to portray 'the human face divine' (here he hemmed once) with the most marvelous accuracy. I should be very happy to explain the principle, by taking copies of some of the beautiful faces, the brilliancy of whose charms illuminate this room." After which characteristic speech, he cast a conceited look round the room, as much as to say—"that's myself!"

"Oh, you do flatter the ladies so much, Mr. Shaw," remarked the ugliest girl in the room, with a desperate effort to blush.

Mr. Shaw bowed and smiled, and brought his hand to his lips, then placed it upon his heart, and bowed again. "The truth is no flattery, Miss Johnson," said he.

Miss Johnson primed and smiled back at Mr. Shaw.

"Light and shade are the principles of the science," continued Mr. Shaw, with the air of a modern lecturer, "and though it has not yet been brought to perfection, enough is known to establish the great utility of the art. I will illustrate it to you, ladies, if you please."

Mr. Shaw then took a sheet of white paper from the table, and tacking it to the papered wall, requested one of the ladies to sit for her profile, the outline of which he traced with his crayon pencil as it was reflected upon the paper. Thus Mr. Shaw went on, illustrating the Daguerreotype, accompanying his performances with a torrent of silly gab, at which the ladies laughed exceedingly, until nearly all the company had been supplied with their profiles. He was quite skilful with the pencil, and though he occasionally amused himself by slightly caricaturing some of the gentlemen, most of his profiles were well drawn,

At length I was pressed in my turn to sit for my profile, and as none had refused, I could not well decline. The light was placed in its proper position, and Mr. Shaw proceeded to adjust my head in a suitable attitude.

"Hold up your head, if you please, Mr. Smith," said he, in a very polite tone; "turn your face a little more to the left—a little more, if you please—there, that'll do—now shut your mouth, if you please, Mr. Smith—that's it—now hold steady, Mr. Smith."

For a minute all were perfectly quiet, and I could hear the scratching of the pencil upon the paper. Presently I heard a half-suppressed laugh, which seemed to pervade the whole company.

"Don't move, if you please, Mr. Smith, or you'll spoil it," said Mr. Shaw.

My position was such that I could not see him without moving my head. Julia was sitting directly before me, and I observed that her face became flushed as the laughing increased—I thought she looked excited. In a few moments, Mr. Shaw announced that it was done.

"Ladies and gentlemen," continued he, "what think you of the likeness?"

I turned and beheld him pointing to the picture of an ass's head, with ponderous ears and mouth distended as if in the act of braying. The blood rushed to my temples, but the whole company were convulsed with laughter, and with a second thought I made a desperate effort to join in their mirth. My ears burned, and I thought my laugh sounded rather more asinine than human—it certainly was but a sorry counterfeit; but I might have forced it for a time perhaps, had not the triumphant artist, in the vehemence of his exaltation, carried the joke a little too far. Observing Julia, who was laughing with the rest, he remarked, pointing to the picture on the wall:

"I must have *your* opinion, Miss Julia. Don't *you* think I have hit the gentleman's features?"

Julia colored and hesitated for a moment. Then turning off with a smile, she replied—"Oh, *of course*, I think it a capital likeness."

Shaw chuckled at her reply, with a meaning grin, which I well comprehended. Julia looked confused and agitated. This was too much—my blood hissed in my veins. Choking with rage, I exclaimed—"Impertinent scoundrel! I'll try my hand at your profile!" and with a blow full in his face, I sent him sprawling among the chairs and table!

There was a sudden rush, and a loud scream from the ladies. The aspect of affairs was changed in an instant.

"Why, John!" exclaimed Julia, grasping me by the arm, after the panic had somewhat subsided; "why, John—I'm astonished at you!"

Already I regretted what I had done, but it was too late. I had disfigured Mr. Shaw's profile, and my rage was changed to chagrin. I grasped my hat, while Mr. Shaw, with his handker-



chief to his bleeding nose, was muttering about "d—d ungentleel"—"in the presence of ladies"—"pistols at ten paces," to which I made no reply, but passed to the door, amidst the confusion I had occasioned.

The ladies were throwing on their shawls and bonnets. Julia followed me to the door—I turned from her—

"John," she asked in an earnest tone of voice, "are you going?"

"Yes," I replied doggedly.

"John!" repeated Julia, with something of supplication in her tone.

"Never mind, Miss Julia," I replied, neither you nor Mr. Shaw shall ever make a laughing-stock of me again."

And with this sullen speech I walked off, leaving her to get home as best she might.

Through the interposition of my sisters, who were Julia's most intimate friends, I had an interview with her on the following evening; but I was in no mood to effect a reconciliation with her on anything like equitable terms. I upbraided her with a want of fidelity which I considered was abundantly evinced by her partiality for Mr. Shaw, and, calling to my aid all the firmness of my stubborn nature, I assured her that I was resolved no longer to be the dupe of a heartless coquette.

At first, the ingenuous girl endeavored to explain her conduct on the previous evening, denying any agency in Mr. Shaw's attempt to throw me into ridicule, and expressing her decided disapprobation of his conduct. But, finding that I was disposed to attach a degree of importance to her acts which she conceived they did not merit, and that in my pique I required her to make acknowledgements too humiliating for her to concede, her spirit became aroused, and I suddenly beheld my once gentle, simple-hearted Julia, transformed into the proud and indignant belle.

I soon discovered that my selfish jealousy, together with my rash, impetuous temper, had urged me to an unjustifiable extremity, and the consciousness that I deserved to lose the esteem of her I loved, added its poignancy to my feelings. To increase my mortification, my evil genius, Shaw, so soon as his eyes had put off the ornamental shading I had given them, renewed his officious attentions to Julia, and seemed to derive adequate satisfaction for the injury I had done him, by exulting in the ruin he had wrought to my peace and happiness. Mr. Shaw was precisely what is meant by the term "*a ladies' man*." I will not attempt a particular description of him—for who does not know a ladies' man?—the genus is confined to no particular meridian, and its distinguishing characteristics are too well-known to need description. Though by no means good-looking, he possessed all the requisite qualifications of an accomplished dandy; and having mingled much in female society, and studied well the art of flattering the young and giddy, it is not to be wondered that I regarded his attentions to Julia with a suspicious eye, or that she found it difficult to repulse them, even though she held his character in contempt. But now that I was no longer her

gallant, and we had absolved each other from our early vows, and exchanged rings and tokens, he became the ready instrument of her wounded pride, which prompted her to receive his addresses with much apparent satisfaction, when indeed she detested him from the bottom of her heart.

For a time, I affected the utmost indifference at the success of my rival; but a canker was gnawing at my heart which soon subdued my pride, and I could no longer disguise the intensity of my suffering. I felt then, indeed, the truth of Bulwer's beautiful lines—

"There is no anguish like the hour,  
Whatever else befall us,  
When one the heart has raised to power  
Asserts it but to gall us."

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## CHAPTER II.

IN vain did mutual friends seek to effect a reconciliation. If I was grossly obstinate and sullen, Julia was no less proud and unyielding; and time only sunk deeper and deeper the sad melancholy to which I had become utterly abandoned. No exertion of my own, nor the playful raileries nor friendly sympathies of my intimates could dispel the gloomy despondency of my thoughts. Constitutionally of a sombre cast of mind, my meditations tended greatly to increase my mental malady, until my family began to entertain fears for my recovery. Already had my health begun to fail, and it was seriously contemplated to subject me to medical treatment. But I did not desire health, for I enjoyed a secret satisfaction in the thought, that, let what might be the consequence—even though death should ensue—the more complete would be my revenge upon the treacherous fair one who had caused my distress.

I agree with you, reader, that I was very silly in entertaining such a thought, and in allowing myself to become such a very Lackaday. But as that prince of lovers very gravely observes, "Human nater is human nater, Mr. Curtis"—and such was my *nater*—the peculiar bent of my disposition. If, like him, or me, you were ever "balked in your perspiring passion," you will be the better able to appreciate my feelings, and the more disposed to view my weakness with charity.

One gloomy afternoon I rose from my seat before the grate—from which I had poked the last blackening coal, as I sat meditating on the various modes of suicide—and, pressing my hat



nearly over my eyes, walked into the street, and, with my hands in my pockets and my chin resting upon my breast, sauntered on, I cared not whither.

What a glorious revenge it would be, thought I, as I pursued my ramble, to drown myself, and then haunt the cruel girl who has caused me such pain ! But then the question arose—can disembodied spirits revisit the earth ?—a problem the affirmative solution of which was all important to the successful accomplishment of my scheme. I was endeavoring to recall my reading on the subject, and revolving in my mind the speculations of different authors, striving at the same time to imagine in advance as near as possible, the horrible sensation of strangulation, without once thinking of the temperature of the river at that season, when plash went my foot into the gutter, which was running almost knee deep with freezing water. The effect was electric, at once putting an end to my project of drowning, unless it might be accomplished by proxy—an improvement, which after a little reflection, appeared by no means impracticable ; and, as I only wished to indulge my revenge, would answer my purpose infinitely better than if I were to put an end to my life in reality. I had only to deposit a portion of my clothing upon the wharf, to write a letter to Julia, declaring my intention, and to absent myself from the city in order to establish my death ; and then, should she relent, I would be alive to enjoy my triumph.

My mind was made up to the deed, and my thoughts were busied in arranging the preliminaries, when I was startled from my reverie, by coming in contact with a long funeral. As it passed, I fell into the train without knowing whose mortal remains I was following to their long home.

As we proceeded to the burial-ground, I learned that the deceased was a young man of my acquaintance, who had died suddenly on the day previous. He was about my own age, and, what was a little remarkable, resembled me so exactly in personal appearance, that those who were best acquainted with us could scarcely distinguish one from the other. He had lived in a different part of the city, and we were only slightly acquainted, but the circumstance of our near resemblance excited my sympathy for his death, and I was perhaps not the least sincere among the numerous train of mourners who attended him to his grave.

After the solemn ceremony of depositing the body in the family vault was concluded, I lingered by the place so well suited to the gloomy tenor of my thoughts, and did not observe the departure of the procession. It was long after the sexton had closed the gates, and not until the lengthened shadows of the marble monuments began to fade from the cold ground, that I discovered that I was alone in that solemn place. Rising at length from the slab upon which I had been sitting, absorbed in gloomy meditation, I walked round the wall in search of a place by which to escape, until I arrived at the north east corner of the yard, where I observed a plank placed against the wall, by

means of which I was enabled to gain the street. That plank, which had doubtless been placed there by some resurrectionist, suggested an idea which capped the climax of the scheme upon which I had been meditating when my attention was attracted by the funeral procession, and I at once resolved to put the plan in execution that very night.

Accordingly I returned home, and going to my solitary chamber, wrote a long letter to Julia, in which, after recurring to the many happy hours I had passed in her society when I had indulged the fond hope that my love for her was not unrequited, I poured forth the agony of my feelings in a strain of eloquence which only the bitterness of my deep despair could have prompted. Then, invoking the choicest blessings upon her, I freely forgave her past conduct towards me, bade her an affectionate adieu, and concluded with the solemn assurance that ere she broke the seal of my farewell letter, the hand that inscribed it and the heart that dictated it, would lie cold beneath the flood.

Leaving this precious production upon my table, duly addressed to "Miss Julia Carson, Arch street," I muffled myself in my cloak and sallied forth, unobserved by any member of the family, who, owing to my strange deportment, had for some weeks past endeavored to keep a close watch upon my movements. I directed my steps to the old drawbridge, where I purchased a suit of sailor's clothes, in which disguise I then proceeded to the grave yard; first having provided myself with every thing necessary for my expedition, such as a dead-lantern, crowbar, screw-driver, and the suit of my own clothes which I had just taken off.

The State-House clock struck twelve, as I approached the silent city of the dead. At any other time my heart would have failed me in such a place and upon such an errand. But now I was insensible to every rational feeling. The romance of my nature was aroused by the bold and reckless enterprize in which I was embarked, and no consideration could sway me from its accomplishment. It was a cold, drizzling night, and so dark that I could scarcely see the nearest object as I groped my way amid the solitary tombs, in the direction of the vault.

The door readily yielded to my crowbar, and, lighting my lantern, I descended to where the coffins lay disposed in their respective niches. Searching out the one of which I was quest, I lost no time in removing the lid; for even in the desperation of my insanity, I was not totally insensible to the terrors of that horrible place,

———"where as they say  
At some hours in the night, spirits resort."

And when I first beheld the cold marble face of the corpse, by the dim light of my lantern, a dread came upon me which required the utmost effort of my nature to overcome. Like Juliet, I thought—what if he should wake,

"And in his rage, with some great kinsman's bone,  
As with a club, dash out my desperate brains!"



But my purpose was immutable, and, resolutely banishing my fears, I deliberately set about performing the offices of the toilette for the corpse, whose quiet repose I had so unceremoniously disturbed.

Having dressed the body in a full suit of my own clothes and placed the coffin in its proper position, I sallied forth with my proxy in my arms. On reaching the street, which I did with some difficulty, owing to the high wall over which I had to clamber, I paused to see if the coast was clear and to arrange my plan of proceeding.

It was past one o'clock, and the street was as silent as the gloomy enclosure I had just left. Not a watchman was to be seen or heard. Taking the corpse upon my back, underneath my cloak, I directed my steps toward the Delaware. I had proceeded as far as the corner of Ninth and Lombard streets, and had turned down the latter towards the river, when, just as I was passing the long brick walls of the old Pennsylvania Hospital, where there was no alley or court in which to hide, I heard the heavy boots of a watchman advancing to meet me. What was to be done? I could not pass without exciting his suspicion, nor could I outrun him with my burthen; and to relinquish it there was only to insure detection. The watchman was fast approaching, and nearly in sight, when I determined upon adopting the only expedient which appeared at all practicable, in the emergency of the case. I sat the corpse upon its feet, hastily threw my cloak about its shoulders, and pulled my fur cap upon its head. It was cold and stiff, and stood erect with a little assistance. As the honest old guardian of the night approached, I commenced a fierce altercation, supplying one part of the dialogue in a feigned voice. After a little muttering, I broke out in a louder tone, as I supported the corpse with one hand against the fire-plug by which we were standing "You're a liar!"—"You're another!"—"I'll break your mouth!"—"You'd better try it, you puppy!"—"Call me a puppy?"—(here the footfalls of the watchman became more rapid)—take that you infernal scoundrel!" Then I affected several groans, and made as much noise as possible with my feet upon the pavement—

"Stop dat! stop dat—viten!" exclaimed the old watchman, hastily approaching.

When he had almost reached the spot, I relinquished my hold and ran round the corner, leaving the corpse to confront the watchman. The stiffened body still stood nearly erect against the fire-plug, muffled in my cloak and cap, when the old Dutchman grasped it by the collar, exclaiming—

"Ah! you tam rascal—you shall go nit me. Come, come, no pulling back, or I'll break your heat."

At that moment, the corpse, jostled from its equilibrium by the watchman's rudeness, swayed away from the side of the plug against which it was leaning. As it fell, and, as the infuriated Dutchman thought, was endeavoring to break away from his hold, he hit it a severe rap over the head with his mace, which

dislodged the cap, and revealed, by the pale light of the expiring street-lamp, its ghostly features.

"Oh, mine Got! mine Got! vat ish I done!" exclaimed the horror stricken Dutchman, as he fled up the street, impelled by the awful conviction that he had either captured an evil spirit, or killed a human being.

I could not refrain from a hearty laugh, the first I had enjoyed in a month, as the fast receding sounds of the Dutchman's well nailed boots died away in the distance.

I again shouldered the body, and succeeded in reaching one of the lower wood-wharves without further interruption. Before committing the body to its new resting place, I sat down to recover my almost exhausted breath, and to meditate upon the adventures of the night. As I recurred to the past, and the excitement of the moment gradually subsided, my mind again relapsed into its wonted gloom, and I could have tossed up "heads or tails" with the corpse to decide which should make the plunge. But my thirst for adventure, and a growing desire to test the practicability of my scheme, impelled me on to the completion of my original design; and after depositing my cloak and cap upon the wharf, I plunged the body into the almost congealing water, and then directed my steps to a remote and retired part of the city, where I might, unobserved by my friends and acquaintances, await the issue.

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### CHAPTER III.

I CONFESS that I was not without some compunctions of conscience when I reflected upon what I had done. But it was too late to retreat. I feared the consequences should the deception which I had practised be discovered, and now my greatest solicitude was to escape the observation of those who might recognise me; and, though I was extremely anxious to hear the gossip to which my suicide had given rise, and to learn how my scheme had succeeded, the following day and night were spent in concealment and suspense.

On the morning of the second day after my adventure, I strolled into a public reading room in the Northern Liberties—a part of the city which I had but rarely visited—where I met with the following paragraph in one of the city papers—



" *Suicide.*—A young gentleman of respectable connections, by the name of John Smith, committed suicide by drowning in the Delaware, sometime during Wednesday night last. He had been in a state of mental despondency for some months past, and from a letter which was found in his room, it is supposed that disappointment in an affair of the heart, was the cause of his committing the rash act, which has plunged his afflicted family into grief unspeakable. His body was recovered near the Navy Yard last evening. His funeral will take place from his mother's residence, No. — Walnut street, this afternoon, at half-past four o'clock."

The paper fell from my hands while my eyes still rested upon that startling paragraph. I had never before reflected upon the consequences of my rash and wicked act. "*Plunged his afflicted family into grief unspeakable!*" These cruel words pierced me to the heart, and overwhelmed me with mortification and shame. What a blow I had inflicted upon my poor old mother and fond sisters! I was the only brother—the only son—and I felt that I had murdered my grayhaired mother. Oh, the agony of that thought! How I abhorred and execrated myself. I left the room, almost resolved to go to my distressed family, and disclose all that I had done. But when I thought of the cruel treatment I had received from Julia, and the triumph she would enjoy, were I to make the disclosure which I had just contemplated, all other feelings yielded to that of insatiable revenge; and the tender emotions that had but a moment before arisen in my bosom, at the thought of the heart-rending misery I had inflicted upon my aged mother, soon gave way to that vilest passion of our nature, which, fed by the combined sentiments of love, jealousy and hate, had now grown to a raging frenzy. Besides, I knew not to what extent I had made myself legally liable, as well as morally culpable, by what I had done, and I came to the hasty resolve to see if possible, the result of the affair, and then leave the home of my youth, never to return.

Accordingly, at the hour appointed for the funeral, I approached the residence of my mother, where I found a large concourse of people assembled, in carriages and on foot. In my well studied disguise, I mingled with the crowd, and listened to the various stories that were in circulation concerning my sad end. The feeling of sympathy for me, and, execration for the authors of my misfortune, was almost universal among those who pretended to know anything of the circumstances. This was balm to my wounded heart. It is not often that one has an opportunity of deriving consolation from such a source; nevertheless I am free to acknowledge that the deep sympathy and universal respect, manifested for me on that occasion, were extremely grateful to my feelings; from which fact I infer that much of the gloomy terrors of the death-hour would be dispelled if the departed could but be conscious of the honors of the funeral ceremony. At length the elegant coffin made its appearance, and was conveyed to the hearse. Immediately after it, came the

mourners, all in deep black—but judge my surprise and gratification, when I discovered, arm in arm with my two grown sisters, Julia, the cause of all my wo, herself in tears, and to all appearance the most disconsolate of the mourning train! With what triumph I exulted in my heart when I heard her broken sobs and deep drawn sighs! Such a moment was worth a life of anguish, and I could scarcely restrain my exultation. Slowly the hearse moved to the burying-ground. Once more I joined in the funeral train—once more I saw the same body consigned to its mother earth; and now I turned away from my own funeral, dead indeed to all my early associations and enjoyments, but not insensible to the bitter miseries of life.

Having changed the character of my disguise, I took lodgings in another part of the city, where I passed as a young gentleman just from the west. Here, in the loneliness of my chamber, I sat down to meditate, and resolve upon what course I should pursue for the future. That I must bid adieu to Philadelphia, and that forever, was a settled matter. But where should I go, and what should I do? were questions not so easily resolved. I had no trade or profession, and little or no knowledge of business, and though I had been reared with good expectations, the little pocket money which I possessed at the time constituted my sole resources. I could now look for no share of my mother's ample estate; and the melancholy conviction forced itself upon my mind, that I must henceforth earn my bread by the sweat of my brow. To me there was nothing so revolting in the thought of toil—but to toil thus—merely for animal subsistence, cut off from all the motives and incitements that make up human energy—that make labor pleasure, and give value to gain—was a destiny from which I shrunk with horror.

I resolved to bend my course to the remote south, where, among strangers, I might venture to assume a new identity, and where I hoped, by the formation of new associations and the adoption of new and more active pursuits, to obliterate in some degree at least, the memory of the past, and if possible to wean my mind from the contemplation of an object which must now ever remain to me a source of misery and regret.

That Julia loved me in spite of her former affected indifference, her conduct at my funeral fully assured me, and no thought carried with it such poignant remorse as the conviction that I had lost her, and plunged myself in poverty and misery by my own indiscretion. Had I pursued a different and a more rational course towards her—had I treated as they merited, her girlish follies—I felt assured that all might yet have been well. But my indomitable temper had led me to the commission of an act, the dire consequences of which I had never calculated, and which time only could reveal. But regrets were vain—the past could not be recalled. She had mourned me dead—and though I was still among the living, I was and must ever remain dead to her.

On the following day I took the steamboat for New-York. Strange indeed were my reflections as I mingled among the va-



rious throng of passengers who crowded the decks. In my fate, the natural order of things seemed to have been reversed. When others "shuffled off this mortal coil" and were consigned to their graves, they left their bodies to moulder there, while their souls departed into other worlds. I, who had been followed to my grave by mourning friends, and over whom sad tears of parting had been shed, had left my heart and soul in Philadelphia, while my dull body was doomed to wander alone and disconsolate through the earth. As the boat glided rapidly up the Delaware, I sat upon the taffrail, and took a last, lingering look at the fast receding city. No hat or handkerchief waved an adieu to me, and my heart sunk within me as the last faint outline of the city of my birth faded from my sight.

In New-York, the saddening sense of my isolated condition only became more forcibly impressed upon my mind, as I looked on an idle spectator of the bustle and confusion of the great commercial metropolis. I was alone amid the busy throng, and as I sought a secluded spot upon the wharf, and listened to the clamor of the draymen, or the enlivening "oh-heave-o!" of the sailors, I could not but think the broken cog-wheel upon which I was seated afforded a striking illustration of my own situation. Like it I had lost my place in the great and complicated machinery of life, which was moving on with its ceaseless hum before me.

One vessel was up for New Orleans, and was to sail with the first wind. In it I secured my passage. On entering my name upon the books of the office, it occurred to me that I should assume a new one to avoid detection; but a moment's reflection assured me that no name could possibly answer my purpose better than my own, which has in this country become so completely anonymous as to be received as doubtful evidence of a man's identity in a court of justice. So down went John Smith, as a cabin passenger for New Orleans.

It was a beautiful afternoon. With a favoring tide and light breeze our gallant little brig dropped down the North River and passed out of the Narrows, just as the sun was gilding the gently undulating waves with his departing rays. There were several passengers, among whom were some who had "ploughed the main" before, but most of our party, like myself, were now for the first time on salt water. The sea seemed as calm and quiet as a slumbering infant, and yet there was, at intervals of about half a minute, a very unpleasant sensation experienced by most of the passengers, who still lingered on deck discussing the horrors of sea-sickness or enjoying the beautiful prospect of Long Island and the Jersey Shore. For a time conversation passed freely, and all seemed filled with new delight and animation by the sudden change which had taken place in their condition. By and by, the convivial spirit evidently began to flag, and faces that had been all life and animation an hour before gradually assumed a serious aspect, as the shades of evening drew on. Some leaned over the bulwarks in moody abstraction,

while others made but a feeble effort to be sociable. One, a ponderous Orleans grocer, who would have shared the fame of Daniel Lambert, had he lived in his day, had early withdrawn from the quarter-deck and sought a comfortable leaning place upon the hen-coop, but where he seemed to be greatly annoyed by the chattering of a cockney dandy, who kept up a ceaseless strain of interrogation to the captain.

"Capting," said he, after a slight pause, during which he looked uncommonly grave—"capting, what makes me feel so—eh?"

"I don't know—leaving your ma, I suppose," replied our merry old skipper.

"Ain't you 'shamed, capting—I don't mean that," replied the dandy, gracefully placing his hand on the pit of his stomach—while his glassy eyes and colorless lips plainly indicated the disturbed state of his craw—"every now and then, I feel sort o'bad right here."

"Why, you're getting sea-sick, you d—d fool!" growled the churlish old grocer, just as he made one convulsive effort to heave the contents of his own capacious stomach into the sea.

The dandy stared——

"That's it," nodded the captain.

"Well, I *thought* it was something remarkable, for I never felt so curious before," replied the astonished dandy, as he essayed to cross to the other side of the deck, doubtless to avoid his uncivil friend the grocer. The first step was taken as if he were about to ascend a pair of stairs—the second as if he were stepping down from an elevation in the deck, and as he ventured the third, the corner of his square-toed boot caught in the seam of his pantaloons with such violence as to split them to the knee, while he went lumbering to the opposite side of the vessel, and only stopped in his impetuous rush when he "brought up" at full length against the bulwarks. He was picked out of the scupper, and raised to his feet by an old tar who came to his assistance.

"Thunderation!" he exclaimed, raising his hand to his head, which had come in rather violent contact with the wood-work—"I didn't see that place before. Whew! I'm so dizzy. Aint the ship turnin round mister?"

"Never you mind," replied the kind old sailor, "it'll all be as straight as a marlin-spike, when you get your sea-legs on. But you'd better drink a little sea water—it'll help you."

"What! that nasty green stuff?—Ugh! it makes me gag to look at it. I'm so sick—I do believe I shall die. Where's the door? I want to go to bed right away," and with the assistance of the sailor, the young gentleman with the torn trowsers made his exit into the cabin.

By this time the breeze had freshened a little, and its gentle murmur, as it breathed through the cordage, was broken only by the merry jests of the well, or the long-drawn groans or



heaves of the sick portion of our crew, which latter class were ranged along in rows on either side, paying reluctant tribute to the ocean-god, occasionally giving vent to their splenetic tempers by quarreling with the others, who, instead of sympathising with them in their afflictions, made their sufferings a subject of mirth and ridicule.

"E-e-eph!" groaned one, "aint there nothing that'll stop it—e-e-eph!—oh! I shall die!"

"E-e-eph!" in another tone, came from the opposite side in reply.

E-e-eph! Oh, Lord, I can't stand it!" groaned out a little sallow-faced, spectacled man, as he clung to the ratlins by which he was leaning.

"Swallow a piece of fat pork," said one; "it'll settle your stomach like a——"

"Oh, go to h—l with your pork," gasped the old grocer, between two spasmodic efforts.

"There! there goes my hat overboard," whined a poor fellow, who had just risen from a perfect paroxysm of the now prevalent disorder.

"That's nothing," replied the fat man; "'spose you had to *throw up* as much as me—I've raised the waist-bands of my breeches full three inches. There comes that snipe again—the very sight of him is enough to turn——e-e-eph—e-eph, oh!"

"I caunt stay down there, capting—it smells so—e-e-eph!—Oh dear, I shall die!" exclaimed the poor dandy, as he came tumbling up the companion-way. "Capping, you must make me a bed up here, for I caunt sleep down there—e-e-eph!—Oh Lord, I know it will kill me—capping, aint there no way to git a doctor—e-e-eph! oh, dear Lordy, oh!—I don't see how people *can* laugh when we're all *so* sick—e-e-eph! Oh——"

Here the poor fellow rolled on the deck, and groaned and heaved at intervals, affording, by his chatterings and contortions, a fit subject of mirth for all who had a stomach for a laugh. Even the old grocer's ponderous sides shook with laughter when he regarded his fellow-sufferer, notwithstanding he had considered his presence an aggravation of his disease.

"Here," said one of the passengers—a young midshipman in the navy—"take this, and it'll cure you," holding up before the prostrate dandy a small piece of fat pork, tied to the end of a hempen string.

"Will it, though?" asked the sufferer, with an air of credulity.

"To be sure it will, if you'll repeat it two or three times."

"How?"

"Why, swallow it, and pull it up again by the string."

"Well, I'll try anything to save my life—but it's too big; I caunt swallow that."

"Yes, you can—down with it."

By this time the eyes of the whole crew, sick and well, were directed to the dandy. He made one desperate effort to swallow the chunk of greasy pork, which had no sooner entered his mouth, than he was again seized with a violent paroxysm.

"E-e-e-eph! oh Lord! lieutenant, I caunt go that—it's too fat—e-e-eph!—Oh take it away—it makes me worse—e-e-eph! oh!——"

A general laugh was enjoyed at the expense of the poor fellow, who remonstrated against such conduct in a manner that only excited anew the risibility of his hearers.

Though I had felt the effects of the "ground-swell" which occasioned the sickening motion of the vessel, yet I had in a great measure escaped the effect of the distressing epidemic which raged so violently among my fellow-passengers, by adopting a recipe for sea-sickness which I had heard when a boy, and which I now found to be an admirable preventive. I would have recommended it to my fellow-passengers, but that I doubted its efficacy, until I had given it a fair trial. On the first slight sensation of nausea, I procured from the steward a large piece of raw codfish, and taking my seat at the foot of the main-mast—where, of course, the motion of the vessel was much less to be felt than at either extremity—I kept myself as quiet as possible, and gnawed my codfish with an excellent relish, while the others were suffering the severest penalties of a first voyage at sea.

It was several days before all the seats at our captain's table were filled; and as often as the weather became a little rough, our dandy-passenger was missed from his accustomed seat. The novelty of nautical life soon wrought a happy change in my feelings, and long before we reached New Orleans, the exciting events incident to our voyage—a recital of which I will spare the reader—had served to dispel much of the gloomy despondency to which I had so long been a victim.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

AFTER idling about a few days among the various places of public resort in the Crescent City, I applied for and obtained a situation in a commercial house, as book-keeper. Here I endeavored, by close application to business, to draw my mind away from the contemplation of the past, in the hope that it might once more permanently regain its wonted sanity; for I could only account for my rash conduct on the ground that my reason had become impaired.

For a time, while everything was novel and strange, I was



not without hope. But ere six months had rolled off, my mind began to relapse into its former channels of thought, and I again became restless and miserable, despite my exertions to shake off the gloomy despondency which, I was but too sensible, was again stealing upon me. Before the term of my engagement, which was one year, had expired, I relinquished my very lucrative situation, from a consciousness that I was incompetent, in my almost frenzied state of mind, to fill so important a trust ; and in the hope of blunting the poignancy of my feelings, abandoned myself to drink. But with me, as with Cassio, wine could not drown remorse, and the inebriating cup only excited me to madness.

On one occasion, while brutally intoxicated, I encountered some sailors on the Levee, with whom I had a quarrel, and by whom I was severely beaten, and robbed of nearly everything I had of value about me. I was carried almost frantic to the Calaboose, where I found myself on the following morning in a most deplorable condition, both of mind and body. It was with the utmost difficulty that I was enabled to procure my release from the authorities, who, as I could give no satisfactory account of myself, persisted in regarding me as a very suspicious person. On my first examination, they insisted, in the face of all my remonstrances and denials, on retaining me in custody as an old offender, and read to me a long list of charges docketed upon their records against John Smith, some of which would have sent me to the gallows or penitentiary for life, had I not ultimately succeeded in establishing my personal identity by respectable witnesses, who had known me since my residence in the city.

Once more at liberty, I found myself without money or friends, and, worse than all, incapable of business by which to obtain a livelihood. I now began to look upon my fortunes as approaching to a desperate crisis, and seriously to meditate an escape from ills I could not bear, by a suicide in earnest.

Such was my condition, and such the tenor of my thoughts, when that gallant old soldier, Gen. Gaines, arrived in the city on his way to Florida to subdue the Seminoles, who were then spreading havoc and destruction throughout that devoted land. I felt that I was indeed "fit food for the rifle's mouth ;" with eagerness "I longed to follow to the field some warlike lord ;" and when the call was made through the city papers for troops, John Smith's name was among the first enrolled upon the list of gallant Louisiana Volunteers. A few days were spent in making preparations, and on the morning of the fourth of February, 1836, I embarked on board the steamer Watchman, a soldier, on my way to the theatre of war.

On our arrival at Tampa Bay, General Gaines found himself in command of about eleven hundred as good troops as ever entered a campaign, but almost entirely destitute of the munitions of war ; and the disparaging alternative presented itself of either returning to New Orleans in our transports, or of march-

ing to meet the enemy without those necessities which we had so confidently expected would be at our command on our arrival at Fort Brook; where, indeed, we found large quantities of provisions, but no means of transportation. The latter expedient was insisted upon by the troops, who were willing to bear their provisions for the march to Fort King—a distance of more than one hundred miles—upon their backs, and to brave every danger and hardship incident to such an expedition, inspired as they were, by the presence of a leader in whom they reposed such unbounded confidence.

Those who are not prepared to concede the oft repeated dogma that man is but the creature of circumstances, have only to pass a few months in the camp to have their scepticism entirely removed. In ordinary life, we are indeed artificial characters, and take our distinctive shade or caste from the sphere in which we move—gentlemen in prosperity or vagabonds in adversity. But in the camp, these artificial distinctions are soon lost. In the rude vicissitudes of camp-life, each is thrown upon his natural resources, and though the polish of refinement may for a time hold its gloss, the rugged contact in which it is brought, with the sternest necessities of animal life—(which a comrade, now no more, used to remark, “knocked the very bark off his human nature,”) will soon remove its restraints, and place the refined and the vulgar upon a level for the time. On our voyage to Tampa, and some time after our encampment, there was a courteous bearing, a sort of chivalric deportment observable among the volunteers, which induced me to believe that I had fallen into an association of the *elite* of the South. The most formal politeness was observed on all occasions. Every man was a general in his bearing, and touched his cap as he passed his fellows, with the air of a French *gen d’armes*. If any thing was missed or mislaid, the word was passed—“Has any gentleman seen my tin cup?” or, “What gentleman’s got our coffee-pot?” And when the article was discovered in the possession of another, it was always by *mistake*, and a profusion of apologies and explanations, and much bowing and scraping was sure to follow—as, “I beg your pardon, sir, for the mistake.” “Oh, no matter, sir.” “I’m very much obliged.” “You’re extremely welcome,” &c. &c. But a few days short rations, and a hard march or two, changed the tone of our camp society. Now the cry was—“What gentleman *stole* my coffee-pot?” and this inconsistency was soon changed to—“What d—d rascal stole our frying-pan?” or, “I can whip the scoundrel that stole my meat!” and it was not unfrequently that a poor fellow’s head came in contact with a frying-pan or camp-kettle, when the same was found in his possession without his earmarks. The word gentleman was in a short time discarded from our vocabulary, and in its stead other familiar titles were substituted, that would not look so well in print. The kindly feelings were soon smothered—selfishness became the order of the day—and he was to be pitied indeed who did not adopt the maxim of the camp, “every man for himself,” &c.



The change in my life was a happy one. The camp with its bustle and excitement, its pageantry and parade, was new to me ; and the hardships and dangers to which we were at all times exposed, as we marched over the arid sands, or penetrated the gloomy hammocks in search of the foe, effectually dispelled the *ennui* with which I had so long been beset ; and as I bent beneath my heavy burthen in the day, or stretched my weary limbs upon the ground at night, I was far happier than I had been since I first awoke from "love's young dream."

Our march was exceedingly severe, and though nothing occurred to test my nerve, my sinews were put to their trial during our scout in search of the enemy upon the Alafia, and our subsequent movement in the direction of Fort Drane. But my first initiation into the frightful horrors of war, was afforded by the awful spectacle presented on our arrival at the place where Major Dade and his gallant band of regular troops had been surrounded and cut to pieces on the 20th of the previous December. The field of Waterloo, after that sanguinary conflict, doubtless, presented a much more imposing spectacle, but certainly was incapable, with all its vast hecatomb of promiscuous dead, of harrowing up such emotions as heaved the breast of every beholder of the melancholy scene before us. The loneliness of the spot—the deep gloom of the trackless forest—the sombre shade and melancholy music of the sighing pines—all contributed to the mournful solemnity of the scene. And then the ghastly, mutilated forms that strewed the ground, the innumerable evidences of the fierceness of the death-struggle of that little band—there, in those savage wilds, where the roar of their artillery had startled the wolf from his covert, and their battle-cry was drowned in the demoniac yell of their merciless foes—all were calculated to impress the mind with a sad sympathy for the fallen brave. In the rude triangular breast-work which marked the spot where the remnant of the devoted band had made their last stand against such overwhelming odds, a grizzly wolf and a vulture lay prostrate with the bodies upon which, perhaps, they had overgorged their long starved appetites. On every pine, the turpentine was glistening in the sun, as it exuded from innumerable ball-holes ; and at a little distance from the enclosure, stood a cart, to which were still attached the skeletons of two oxen and a horse, that lay as they had been shot down, with the harness still upon them. The track of the little column, from the spot where the attack was first commenced, back to where the death-struggle had ensued, was literally strewed with the wreck of battle. Even the veteran Gaines could not disguise his emotion, as the men were busied in their sad task of collecting the mangled bodies for burial. They were interred with all the imposing solemnities of military usage, in three graves, the men in two large ones, and the officers, who were easily identified by their dress, in another of smaller dimensions. Planting their cannon at the head of the latter, to mark the spot, we resumed our march, leaving

them to sleep, not upon the "field of glory," the soldier's last and proudest privilege; but, like all who fall by the savage foe, in the gloom of forgetfulness: where the tall pines that alone witnessed their valor, shall cast their evergreen shade over their isolated resting place, and sigh as they toss their aged arms to the skies, their never ceasing requiem.\*

On the following day we arrived at the pine pickets of Fort King, where we were again disappointed in our expectation of obtaining provisions, baggage-wagons, ammunition, &c. We were, however, speedily supplied by Gen. Clinch, from Fort Drane, so far as was in his power to afford us assistance, and after a brief rest, we again took up our line of march, with five days' provisions upon our backs, for the point on the Withlacoochee, where it was supposed the Indians were in force.

It has been urged by those who have lamented the disastrous result of this campaign, that General Gaines was to be blamed for rashly entering the enemy's country, without the necessary preparations for a protracted campaign. I have no objection that others should enjoy their own opinions in regard this matter; nevertheless, I am disposed to take a very different view of the conduct of that officer, and so far from visiting him with censure, I feel that he merits the esteem and gratitude of the country, for his gallant and soldier-like deportment in Florida. He was anxious to give the people of that territory relief, and promptly placing himself at the head of an efficient force, and knowing well the Indian character, he hastened at once to the field, as one who came to chastise, not to frighten or entreat. True, he did not consume time in making such extensive preparations, as distinguished the equally unsuccessful campaign of the three armies that immediately succeeded him; but he relied not less on the supplies which he had been informed were already at the different posts, than on the co-operation of such troops as might reach the country from other states. And had he been sustained with the resources then actually at command, and which could as well have been hastened to his aid, as consumed at Picolati, and on the way between that post and Fort Drane, or had the gallant Clinch been permitted to co-operate with him as he suggested, and as the latter would cheerfully have done, the annals of our country would never have been marred with the history of the protracted and disgraceful Indian war which ensued, and in which was spilled some of the best blood of the nation. But I may not digress, even to poise a lance in defence of my old general.

\* The bodies of Dade's battalion have been removed since the above was written, by order of Col. Worth, to St. Augustine, where they have been interred in a manner highly creditable to the officers and soldiers of the army, by whose patriotic munificence the gallant dead of Florida have been rescued from the oblivious wilderness in which they fell.



## CHAPTER V.

It was early on the second day after our departure from Fort King, that our advance guard reached the bank of the Withlacoochee. As we approached the bank of that wild stream, whose tawny waters glided with a lazy current, amid cypress swamps and sleepy lagoons, to the ocean, as still and calm as if its glossy surface had never been ruffled by human power, suddenly the sharp crack of the rifle peeled upon our startled ears, and from a thousand throats came the terrific war-whoop of the savages who lay concealed upon the opposite bank.

I felt a thrill of excitement run through every nerve. It was the first time that I had ever heard that blood-curdling yell, and I was soon, for the first time, to participate in mortal combat. I cannot describe my feelings at that moment. It was not fear ; it was not anger that made me tremble ; but my mind was oppressed with a strange compound of mingled emotions. There was a sort of indefinite, indescribable sense of imminent peril ; a feeling of suspense, the more painful because of its uncertain brevity. Perhaps my last breath was in my nostrils ! It was but for a moment ; but in that brief moment a lifetime of thought ran through my brain, and all the unfinished business of an ill spent life pressed itself upon my mind ! \* \* \* \* \*

One volley—one shout of defiance, and my agony was over. Then came the enthusiasm, the inspiration of battle, and the next moment, when a riderless horse came dashing furiously past, his flank all streaming with blood, there was nothing in the sight to appal ; I felt at ease amid the danger and din of mortal strife, and snuffed the sulphurous atmosphere with as much composure as a veteran. A sharp fire was kept up on both sides for near an hour, when, finding it impossible to cross the stream at that point without the aid of boats, the army fell back to a little distance from the river, and passed the night in the breast-works thrown up by General Clinch, on the night previous to the battle of the Withlacoochee.

At sunrise on the following morning, we were again in line, and moved down the river a distance of about two miles, where it was understood there were less natural obstacles to prevent our crossing the stream. On again approaching the bank, we met with a reception similar to our first greeting, which we returned with a free good will ; and the spirited interchange of noisy compliments was kept up without intermission, until near one o'clock in the afternoon, when the red rascals, for reasons best known to themselves, declined the sport. During this spirited affair, many of our men were killed or wounded.

Retiring a short distance from the river we threw up a breast-work, in which we passed the night without molestation. But about ten o'clock on the following morning, the enemy paid us a call on our own side of the river, and for the space of two hours or more, their rifles kept up as enlivening a *tête-à-tête* with

our yagers and muskets. "as one might wish to hear." For a time the rifle balls whistled about us like hail, and many of our men were obliged to acknowledge, some with groans, others with curses, the receipt of those "leaden messengers of death." To me there is no "charm to soothe" in the music of a rifle-ball, and in spite of all my philosophy, I found it difficult to bear in mind at the moment when they flew thickest, the well attested fact, that "they are harmless so long as one can hear them whistle." Several more names were added to the list of our killed and wounded. Among the latter was that of our brave old general himself, who was indebted to the enemy on this occasion for the performance of a novel dental operation; a rifle-ball having passed through his nether lip, removing one of his front teeth. The old gentleman is not in command of more than a corporal's guard of this class of troops, and as a matter of course, was rather vexed at the rascals for thus unceremoniously depriving him of one of his veteran front rank-men.

It was night. The merry notes of the tattoo had but just ceased to send back their faint echoes from the surrounding gloom, when, as if by appointed signal the whole woods, on every side, were lit up by the blaze of Indian rifles, while the welkin rang with the rattling report, mingled with that horrid yell, to me more terrible than their weapons. For a time, the blaze of fire-arms almost illumined the dark scene, while the solemn woods for miles around, reverberated with the deafening peels of our musketry, or the sullen roar of our single field-piece, which, like some hoarse mastiff amid the yelping kennel of lesser throats, towered at intervals above the din. I was in the act of rising from my knee, in which position we had been ordered to fire, when I felt a sudden twinge in the left arm.

"I wish you'd keep your ramrod to yourself," I remarked to my file-leader, who was loading as if he had a covey of partridges in view.

"Take that, and be d—d to you," said he, as he discharged his piece and commenced re-loading, too much engaged to hear me. "I'll bet I put some of you to sleep without rocking, if you git in my way, now," he continued, apparently fully intent upon putting his threat in execution.

"Zip!" exclaimed one as a ball whistled past his head. "You'll waste your sweetness on the desert air, mister Ingin, if you aim so high."

"Oh, for a pair of stove-pipes for my legs; if *they* were only insured against rifle-balls, I could run with the rest, if the worst came to the worst. But it would just be my luck to be crippled for life," said a long-legged joker, as he bent upon his knees.

"Stand up to your rack, Bob, and never mind your legs," replied his file-leader.

"Oh, my God, I'm killed!" groaned one, and the next moment two men were seen bearing a poor fellow towards the surgeon's quarters.

"There," said a reckless fellow near me, "what good would a dozen pair of legs do Bill, now?"



"That's a fact," replied another, "them as has legs to use better use 'em now; but I'm 'terminated to see it out myself."

"Come, boys—its no time to be indulgin' in levity. Load and fire in quickest time, is the captain's orders," remarked our old Irish corporal.

"And, blast their yelling souls—hit 'em *every* time you fire, Patrick, as I do," said one as he discharged his gun.

"Hurra, Blues! give it to them!" shouted an officer, passing down the line.

"They're coming closer—see! the flash of that rifle was not thirty paces off!"

I had paused for a moment not seeing anything to shoot at; but as the enemy were evidently advancing, and their fire seemed to take more effect, I attempted to seize my gun, but my left arm refused to perform its office, and my hand hung benumbed and useless at my side. Upon examination I found the blood streaming profusely from a wound in the fleshy part of my arm, just below the elbow. It was a rifle-ball instead of my friend's ramrod that had attracted my attention but a few moments before. Though the wound was slight it incapacitated me for service, and I was ordered to the centre of the enclosure, where I was compelled, much against my will, to remain inactive, amid surrounding strife and confusion. It was late when the enemy retired.

Day-break was their signal for renewing the onset. Owing to the great disparity of force and the scarcity of ammunition, it was not deemed prudent to make a sortie, especially when it was evident that such an expedient could only result in dispersing the enemy, whom, we were too well assured, were concentrated at this point, and whom, it was the policy of our general to entertain and keep together until reinforcement, and a concerted action with General Clinch, would enable him to make a decisive movement. An express had been dispatched to Fort Drane, and while a part of our force kept the enemy at bay, numbers were employed in constructing boats with which to cross the river when we should receive the necessary supplies. But no succor came—our provisions were soon exhausted, and after a few days, a more formidable enemy than the savage foe, stared us in the face. Famine, with its lean and haggard aspect and sunken eye, stalked through the camp, dispiriting the brave and unnerving the strong. Another express was dispatched, and yet no relief. Still was Gaines the same resolute and intrepid leader that he had been in younger and more glorious days, and his noble example cheered and encouraged his suffering soldiers when precept would have failed. The wily savages were not ignorant of our condition, and at the time when we were reduced to the extremity of eating our poor horses, who reeled as they walked, many of them suffering from wounds, and all perishing for food—they renewed the fight with redoubled energy and the most determined desperation. They had grown bolder—they set the tall grass and leaves on fire, and while the volumes of flame and smoke curled over our heads, they made

one desperate effort, as if they would scale our works, which we could repel only in the last extremity, owing to the scarcity of our ammunition. But when they approached near enough, under cover of the smoke, to bring them almost within pistol-shot, our brave fellows gave them a reception that made them recoil like vipers from the file.

During the night of the 5th of March, the seventh since our encampment in the breast-works, a voice hailed our sentinels from the opposite side of the river, and informed us that, (to use the speaker's own words,) "de Injan say him done tired fight, and want to make traty;" and on the following morning, their delegates, under the protection of a dirty white flag, made their appearance, and were met by a corresponding number of our own officers, at some distance from the breast-works, where a palaver ensued. While this sage council was sitting cross-legged upon a log, engaged in their efforts to effect a diplomatic adjustment of the difficulties which had embroiled the two nations in war, a respectable showing of the bulwark of the Seminole nation was paraded in full view of the camp.

I sat upon a log with my wounded arm in a sling, devouring a dog's heart, roasted without salt, while the treaty was going on. I was meditating upon the probable result of the armistice, when I observed a sudden commotion among the red gentry, and immediately a loud volley of musketry broke upon my ear. The next moment the woods were red with flying Indians, shouting "Clinch! Clinch!" as they dashed headlong in the direction of the river. The gentlemen of the council "stood not upon the order of their going," but went, abruptly deferring all further deliberation until "*to-morrow*." The whole camp was in commotion—joy lit up the smoked and haggard countenances of the men—and I dashed my dog's heart to the dogs, and threw up my cap with a hearty hurra! as I saw through the woods the blue jacket of the gallant Clinch, approaching at the head of his brave Georgians and Regulars, and knew that relief had come at last.

After delaying a few days, in order to give the Indians an opportunity of renewing the peaceful negotiations which his vanguard had so suddenly interrupted—but which it seemed they never intended to consummate—General Clinch, in obedience to the instructions of the commander-in-chief, withdrew the army from the Withlacoochee to Fort Drane. Arrived at this post, our own general, having resigned his command, took his leave of those who had been his associates in his brief but arduous campaign.

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## CHAPTER VI.

A LIFE of inactivity was but ill suited to my peculiar temperament; and I had remained in our snug quarters, in the vicinity of Fort Drane, only a few days, during which time my



wound had become entirely healed, before I began to feel restless and dissatisfied ; and notwithstanding the privations and hardships I had just endured, I was extremely anxious to exchange the dull tedium of the camp for the excitement of the field. We were to remain in this state of inactivity, until General Scott should be enabled to complete his arrangements, preparatory to a simultaneous movement against the enemy from different points, by which that officer hoped to put an end to the war.

The time wore heavily on, and I determined to adopt some expedient to relieve the dull monotony of a life in camp. Accordingly, one day I proposed to four others of my companions to violate the standing order of the day, by stealing out into the woods and taking a hunt. My proposition was readily agreed to, and we set out with our yagers in search of the deer and wild turkies which abound in almost every thicket or hammock in Florida. Our departure was unobserved by the guard, and we hurried away from Camp Smith, as our new encampment was called, in honor of Col. Smith, of the New Orleans Volunteers, intending only to go so far that the report of our guns might not reach the camp.

We had strayed far away amid the picturesque wilds of that delightful country, ere we were aware of our remoteness from the army. The scenery was enchanting, and even at that early season of the year, wore an aspect of luxuriance and freshness, that could not fail to inspire the beholder with a love for the wild beauties of nature. Now we strayed through open meadows of waving grass, startling the herds of wild cattle from their browsing beside meandering rivulets, or descended into the thick groves of fragrant orange and magnolia, where the wild vines wrought net-work over our heads, and the rich drapery of spring hung in graceful festoons from every bough. Then perchance we stood beneath the wide-spreading shade of the ever-green live-oak, whose gnarled arms, laden with long, pendant moss, had battled with the storms of centuries ; or pressed with our feet the green-carpeted banks of some beautiful lake, whose transparent waters mirrored upon its placid surface the stately forms and dark green foliage of the trees that skirted it on every side.

Occasionally pausing to examine the rarer wild flowers that attracted our attention, or to quench our thirst in the cool, gurgling springs that gushed from many a hill-side, we wandered on, forgetful of every danger, and even unmindful of the object of our pursuit, until becoming weary, we threw ourselves upon a mossy bank, close by a spring of delightful water, to rest and partake of the scanty repast we had brought with us. Though we had apprehended little or no danger from the Indians, so close to Fort Drane, yet we had no disposition to separate, and as we stalked through the woods, generally in free conversation, we could not expect to surprise much game. Indeed we felt too sensibly the calm influence of the mimic Eden through which we had strayed, to think of the rude sports of the chase ; and the

spot upon which we had accidentally paused, afforded a prospect too richly endowed with all the charms of nature, to admit of any other thoughts than those of admiration and delight. There were no rugged mountains nor frowning granite cliffs to give grandeur and sublimity to the view: but the gently undulating slopes, clothed with the rich verdure of the spring, the placid lake, the murmuring rivulet, the richly tinted flowers, nodding to the soft breath of the fragrant zephyr, and the sweet music of the birds, lent an air of pastoral beauty to the scene, and imparted a feeling of tranquillity and peace to the mind, delightful beyond the power of description. Surely such a scene it was that pleased the blind Bard's fancy, when he wrote of

"A happy rural seat of various view;  
Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm,  
Hung amiable, Hesperian fables true,  
If true, here only, and of delicious taste:  
Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks  
Grazing the tender herb were interposed,  
Or palmy hillock; or the flow'ry lap  
Of some irreguous valley spread her store,  
Flow'rs of all hue and without thorn the rose:  
Another side, umbrageous grots and caves  
Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine  
Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps  
Luxuriant: meanwhile murm'ring waters fall,  
That to the fringed bank with myrtle crown'd  
Her chrystal mirror holds, unite their streams.  
The birds their choir apply: airs, vernal airs,  
Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune  
The trembling leaves."

"Is not this a lovely spot!" said one of our little party, in a tone of enthusiastic admiration.

"It is indeed!" replied my sentimental friend Sam, surveying the enchanting scene as he spoke. "How willingly would I end my days in such a place. Happy indeed must have been the state of those primitive people who lived in the good old patriarchal times; whose lives were passed amid such scenes as this, and whose sole care was to guard their grazing flocks. With hearts scarce less simple than those of their lambs and kids, they passed their days in dreams of love, equally contented and happy. Unsophisticated in their sentiments and feelings, temperate in their desires, and unconstrained by conventional forms, they roved the green fields of earth in the full enjoyment of natural liberty; while the pure felicity of their enjoyment flowed on, uninterrupted by any of the thousand vexatious cares, mortifications and disappointments which embitter the cup of life."

"By George," exclaimed one, cocking up the brim of his beaver, and looking wildly about as he spoke, "if there is any such a thing as the influence of association, a fellow would soon turn to a sweet-gum or a black-jack, if he was to make his home in this wild region."



"That's a fact," said Crockett, as he bent down to dip a cup of water—"I begin to feel like I was getting a bark on me a'ready."

"I have somewhere seen mankind," continued Sam, in a serious tone, "called a *vegetable*; and though I am not prepared to say that there are not some scions of father Adam's stock, that seem to warrant the comparison, yet I am more inclined to class him with the elements. The element of human nature is not unlike that of water, at least in one characteristic. In small communities, it is generally passive and harmless, but in proportion to its immensity, it becomes turbid, vicious, and depraved. Yon glassy lake, or this gurgling rill, like man in his primeval state, is pure, tranquil and beautiful; but is not the turbulent ocean, carrying death and destruction in its restless surges, with its treacherous quicksands and hidden rocks, a fit emblem of our densely populated cities, where every vice that can corrupt and debase the species is practised, and where treachery, sin, and misery, roll their dark waves over the moral sea of human relations."

All but the speaker enjoyed a hearty laugh at Sam's strained philosophy.

"It's a fact," said he; "show me a crowded city, and I'll show you vice and misery in all their various degrees—a rural cot, and if not exalted virtue, truth and purity, at least simplicity and contentment. Man, though an intellectual being, formed for social life, is corrupting in his influence upon his fellows, and when viewed in the aggregate, resembles the element of which I speak, in more ways than one."

"That will do very well for an offset to the vegetable theory, at least," I remarked.

"That's a fact," remarked Crockett; "Sam moralizes first rate, but he'd have to preach a better stave than that, before he could get me to run wild again, like they say them old chaps were. I believe in civilization and town society, myself, and there ain't no place for me like Natchez, that ever I see'd yet."

Sam made no reply to Crockett, but throwing himself over on his back, with his arms crossed under his head, commenced—

"Oh, that the desert were my dwelling place,"

"Well! every feller to his liking," interrupted Crockett; "but I couldn't live where there warn't no galls, no how—God bless 'em."

The enraptured ruralizer continued—

"With one fair spirit for my minister—  
That I might all forget the human race,  
And hating no one, love but only her."

"Ah, that might do; with a right pretty gall for a minister, I don't know but I might——"

"Become an Anchorite?" interrupted one.

"A whaterite?" asked Crockett, with a stare.

"Oh, hush, Crockett, you don't know what you are talking

about," replied Sam. Then, after gazing a moment abstractedly into the thick canopy of over-arching branches, through which the declining sun scarce penetrated, he broke forth with one of Pope's sweet pastorals—

"Hear how the birds in every bloomy spray,  
With joyous music wake the dawning day!  
Why sit we mute when early linnets sing,  
When warbling Philomel salutes the spring?  
Why sit we sad when Phœbus shines so clear,  
And lavish nature paints the purple year?"

To which, catching the inspiration of my friend, I replied:

"Sing, then, and Damon shall attend the strain,  
While yon slow oxen turn the furrow'd plain.  
Here the bright crocus and blue violets glow,  
Here western winds on breathing roses blow.  
I'll stake yon lamb, that near the fountain plays,  
And from the brink his dancing shade surveys."

Sam continued, raising aloft his tin cup, upon which his name was carved with many an odd device, by way of ornament—

"And I this bowl, where wanton ivy twines,  
And swelling clusters bend the curling vines:  
Four figures rising from the work appear,  
The various seasons of the rolling year;  
And what is that ——"

"Ingins, boys! Ingins!" exclaimed Crockett, springing toward his gun. Each seized his yager, but ere we had risen to our feet, a volley of rifle-balls whistled over our heads, slightly wounding Crockett in the cheek.

The next moment a loud yell, that sent the blood curdling to our hearts, resounded through the woods, and as we hastily sprang behind the nearest trees, two more shots, which had been kept in reserve, were directed toward us from the adjacent thicket, which had served to screen our lurking foe. We did not immediately return the fire, but waiting until the Indians, in their attempt to reduce the distance between us, became exposed to our aim, we gave them a well directed fire from our five yagers, three of which took effect, somewhat reducing the number of our assailants. The Indians had by this time reloaded their pieces, and still greatly superior in numbers, rushed madly toward us, incensed to desperation—if such demons needed incitement—by the loss they had sustained. In this dilemma, flight was our only hope, and calling to my comrades to keep together, I led the way from our covert. While thus exposed the Indians fired, and two of our party were seen to fall. Sam, exclaiming, "Satan was in Paradise!" dashed down his yet unloaded gun, to free himself from all encumbrance, but ere he had made a dozen strides from the spot, he too fell groaning by my side.

Our party was now reduced to two, and my companion and myself, still retaining our guns, dashed through the open woods with the reckless speed of men who fled from death in its most



horrid form. The Indians were not slow in their pursuit, and it was long after their hideous yell had died upon our ears, and not until we had reached the midst of a dense and almost impenetrable swamp, that we felt that we had eluded their search, and that we were for a time free from danger. We passed the night in the dismal swamp which had afforded us concealment from our pursuers, by climbing it to the top of a large tree, where we sat out the long gloomy hours, our ears only greeted by the doleful howl of the wolf, the fierce scream of the panther, or the startling whoop of our nearer neighbors, the owls—all of which tended little to relieve the sombre caste of our reflections.

As the day was breaking in the east, on the following morning, we clambered down from our hiding place, and set out in what we hoped to be the direction of the camp, though we knew not whether each step carried us nearer to, or farther from the point which we so anxiously wished to gain. Keeping constantly a sharp look out, that we might not again be surprised, we travelled on with rapid strides, anxiously hoping that we might meet some peculiar object which would confirm us in our course. In the anxiety of our minds, we had forgotten every other consideration but that of our personal safety, and though we had neither eaten or slept since the previous day, yet we flagged not, such is the elasticity and vigor imparted to the physical frame, by extreme exigency of circumstances operating upon the mind. Onward we traveled, now in despondency, and now with reviving hope, as some peculiar aspect of the distant view seemed to indicate our proximity to some place of human abode. Once we thought we heard the report of fire-arms, but at a distance so remote, that we could not distinguish whether it was that of the musket or yager, or of the rifle of our enemies—in which latter case, there was, to us, certainly nothing very luring in the sound.

The sun was already hidden among the tree-tops, when we discovered, far away in the direction in which we supposed our camp to lie, a cloud of rising smoke, which we hailed with as great joy as did the Israelites their cloud and pillar of fire in the wilderness. As the shades of evening thickened around us, we hastened on in the direction of the camp, whose blazing fires now sent up their cheerful light, and by which we directed our course, felicitating ourselves upon our fortunate escape, and fully resolving within our hearts, that if it was our evil fortune again to encounter the Indians, it should not be without our host. Such was our eagerness to join our friends, that we did not even pause for the challenge of the sentinels, but hastened forward in the direction of the fires.

We had almost penetrated into the camp, when, to my utter horror and dismay, I discovered that we had rushed into the very den of the enemy! "Hi-e-lah! Este-hadkah!" exclaimed a dusky form, springing up before us, apparently not less terrified than ourselves. On the wings of terror we rushed from the place; but we had been discovered, and now a legion of yelling fiends were in hot pursuit of us, through the open pine

woods. It was a cloudless night, and the moon, which had risen above the trees, sent its calm, pale rays into the open woods, yielding a light scarce less brilliant and clear than that of the sun, affording our pursuers every advantage which daylight could have given them. Shot after shot pealed through the woods, and so close did they press upon us, that we had no time to elude them by dodging, and no thicket presented itself as far as the eye could reach. A spent-ball penetrated my thigh, but it only added fleetness to my gait, as I dashed impetuously on. Once, I cast a look behind; two Indians were abreast, far in advance of the howling pack—I turned behind the next pine, and taking deliberate aim, fired—"Wah!" exclaimed one, as he fell forward, upon his face. I saw his companion stoop over him, while the woods echoed with the yells of those in the rear. Reloading my piece, as I dashed on, endeavoring to keep each tree that I passed between myself and my pursuers, I again began to increase the distance between us. Again I covered myself by a tree, and again the foremost Indian halted from the chase. Reloading, as before, I hastened on, my companion a little in the rear, when suddenly, to my utter consternation, I found myself close on the margin of a broad lake, extending far on either side. To alter my course, would only bring me nearer my pursuers; all escape seemed hopeless; a heavy volley whistled past, as the infuriated savages approached, yelling in hideous concert. I turned to meet my fate at the moment my companion fell to the ground. Half rising, and calling to me in the most piteous tones, he was grasped by the ruthless savages who clustered around him. Amid the shout and din, I heard the tomahawk cleave his skull, and heard his expiring groan. In their midst I fired, and dashing my gun into the lake, rushed into the thick tall weeds that grew far out into the water, determined, at least to escape the appalling fate of my companion. As I looked back, I felt a numbing sensation in my breast, and the warm blood gushed upon my hand. I was falling from the stunning shock, when I grasped among the tall iron-weeds for support, some of which broke off in my hands. They were hollow, and placing one in my mouth, I sank beneath the surface, where, not without difficulty, I succeeded in drawing a breath or two through the weed. After moving to some distance from where I had first disappeared, and to where the water was deeper, I was forced to raise my head to the surface, in order that I might enjoy a freer respiration. The cold water soon coagulated the blood, and the severe wound which I had received in my breast ceased to bleed; and, though I cannot say that I felt comfortable in my new element, yet the sense of even temporary security from my merciless pursuers, was no small relief to my mind. Luckily, the position which I had attained, was thickly grown with tall weeds and pond lilies, so that while I had an opportunity of observing the movements of the Indians, I remained completely screened from their view. They were nearly all gathered round some two or three, whom I had either killed or wounded by my last fire, while some three



or four of their number were moving among the weeds and water in search of my body.

I remained in my concealment until they gave over the search, and departed, yelling like so many fiends from a hellish carnival to their camp.

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## CHAPTER VII.

THE moon had risen high in the Heavens, ere I ventured to emerge from my uncomfortable concealment. I was chilled to the very vitals, and a cold shudder ran over my whole frame as I attempted to drag my stiffened limbs along the beach. Fearing that the Indians might possibly be lurking in the vicinity, I determined to lose no time in quitting the place which had been the scene of so much horror, and, if possible, to reach some spot of greater safety. But my limbs refused to perform their office, and I sunk down upon the ground, shivering and cold, unable to proceed. The wound in my breast began to bleed afresh, a burning fever seized me, and I crawled to the beach to quench my parching thirst. A dimness came over my eyes, accompanied by a dreadful nausea. My head became dizzy, and lake, ground, and bushes wheeled round and round, till darkness shut them out from my view.

The tall pines threw their lengthened shadows far over the moon-lit lake, and their tops tossed to and fro in the chill wind, with a sullen roaring sound, when I rose from the cold earth. Ragged white clouds were passing swiftly overhead, and occasional gusts of wind startled me as they rustled the leaves and bushes at intervals. How long I had lain there I could not tell, but it was evident from the position of the moon, that many hours had passed during my unconscious slumber. With difficulty I regained my feet, and binding my handkerchief as well as I could upon the frightful wound in my breast, I again essayed to leave the spot. Slowly and stealthily I plodded my way along the lonely beach, until I reached the extremity of the lake, then striking into the woods, I travelled on, unconscious of the course I was pursuing, until I reached a deep thicket, into which I turned and sat me down to rest.

I suffered excessively, both from loss of blood and hunger, and I sank back against the trunk of a tree, where I hoped I might die in peace. Filled with the most desponding thoughts, I sat out the dark hour which preceded the approach of day; but when the streaks of amber light began to ascend the east, and shortly after, when the sun sent up his cheering rays, dispersing the gloomy shadows of the night, and tinging the dewy leaves with gold, while the hymn of nature rose upon the morning breeze from every glittering spray, imparting life and ani-

mation to the scene, my subdued and broken spirit seemed to take its tone from the brightening prospect, and I remembered that "while there is life there is hope."

My first business was to obtain something wherewith to satisfy my craving appetite. With my large knife I was enabled to procure an abundant supply of palmetto and other nutritious roots, upon which, and a few craw-fish, I made a hearty meal. By this time my wounds began to be very sore, and on examination I found I had received other slight injuries besides those in my breast and thigh. But having partaken of a hearty breakfast, I soon felt sensible of my returning strength, and though but ill calculated, in my crippled condition, to survive a journey through the wilderness, much less to combat the foe which surrounded me on every side, I was encouraged by the past to hope for the future. I felt that my destiny was in the hands of an overruling Providence, to whom I was alone indebted for the preservation of my unprofitable life. What dangers had I not passed? and what hand but that of omnipotence could have preserved me amid the perils of the past few days? A strange feeling sprang up in my breast—and, unworthy as I was, I breathed a fervent aspiration to Him, who, in much mercy, had permitted me to live to repent of the past, and whom I trusted, with an abiding faith, would again restore me to my pious mother, that I might repair, in some degree, the wrongs I had done her.

With slow and cautious steps, I again resumed my way, ever hoping that the next hour would bring me either to the camp I had left, to some of the numerous military posts, or to some settlement of the whites. But night again closed around me in the lonely wilderness. By the bright moon-light, I wandered on, until I came to a public road. Whither it led I knew not, but that it would direct me to some settlement I was certain, and taking one end, I determined to travel as long as my strength would permit, or until I reached some place of safety. The moon had nearly gone down ere I sought a place of rest. Turning into a thicket at some little distance from the road, I gathered a pallet of moss and laid down to rest, but not to sleep, unless that condition, when one is half sleeping and half waking, startled at intervals by horrid visions, might be called sleep.

Various and strange were the visions shadowed upon my sleeping senses, as I lay upon my moss-bed in the dark and solemn woods. Now I stood by the gushing fountains of Fair Mount—the gardens were illuminated with lamps of transcendent brightness—I heard the rushing of the pent-up waters, and the smothered thunder of the mighty engines—streams of crystal water rose from innumerable jets, and came showering down among the green branches of the trees like liquid diamonds—the gravelled walks were filled with gay throngs of people—delicious viands were spread around—soft music floated upon the air—the song and dance were there, and joyous faces greeted me on every side—but oh, vision of loveliness! Julia hung upon my arm, and the rich melody of *her* voice poured its



enchantment on my ear, in accents of love \* \* \* \* \*  
 The illusion passed \* \* \* \* \* I stood beneath the  
 brilliant chandeliers of the gay saloon—my sisters, my friends  
 were there—'twas a joyous company, but *I* was not happy—  
 there was one that looked coldly upon me—I gazed upon her as  
 she passed me with averted face—she leaned upon the arm of my  
 hated rival, who turned upon me a smile of triumph. I left the  
 hall and the gay assemblage to meditate alone \* \* \* \* \*  
 Again the scene was changed \* \* \* \* \* I was  
 stretched upon a sick bed—my mother's soft, melancholy eyes  
 rested upon me—she called my name, but I could not speak—  
 a shroud lay upon the table, and I knew that I was dying \* \*  
 \* \* \* \* \* Then the din of battle, the peal of arms, and the  
 shout of the foe burst upon my ear—I had fallen, and was  
 crushed to the earth beneath horses' feet, but could not call for  
 aid \* \* \* \* \* The battle ceased, and the vision pas-  
 sed from the magic mirror of my fancy \* \* \* \* \* I  
 knew that I was upon my moss-bed—it was bright moon-light,  
 and I cast my eyes around upon the leaves and bushes—a foot-  
 fall attracted my ear—I listened—it surely was no dream—low  
 voices whispered together, and then a swarthy Indian approach-  
 ed—behind him were many more. With stealthy step he drew  
 near—his eyes glared with demoniac fury—his hideous face  
 was smeared with gore—a bloody knife was in his hand, and  
 clots of blood hung from his shaggy scalp-lock. I would have  
 fled but could not—I would have plead for mercy but my tongue  
 was paralyzed. Brandishing his bloody knife, he hovered over  
 me—frozen with terror I gasped for breath—he bore me  
 to the earth—his knee was upon my breast—with one fiendish  
 yell, he plunged his knife deep into my side! \* \* \* \* \*  
 \* \* I awoke just as an owl that had perched itself upon a tree  
 above my head, sent forth its wild, startling hoot. I was lying  
 upon my back, trembling in every joint, while the cold perspira-  
 tion stood in large drops upon my face. I turned upon my side  
 and drew the moss closer about me, but when I again lost the  
 sense of pain in sleep, it was only to allow my mind still wilder  
 vagaries in the world of dreams.

At early dawn I resumed my journey. I had not proceeded  
 far, however, when I discovered numerous moccasin tracks in  
 the sand, and several strange and uncouth figures, which ap-  
 peared freshly made. As these indicated the presence of In-  
 dians, I resolved to leave the road for fear they might pursue  
 my tracks, if they did not meet me on the way. Striking again  
 into the woods, I kept a constant look-out for Indians as I tra-  
 veled on, occasionally pausing to rest, or to fill myself with the  
 sparkle-berries and haws, which I found in great abundance.  
 Night again began to close around me, still in the lonely wil-  
 derness. My wounds had become exceedingly painful, and I  
 began to fear that I would be unable to proceed farther. As the  
 sun was setting beneath the clouded horizon, and the sombre  
 shadows were gradually dissolving into darkness, I laid me down  
 upon my rude couch. My mind was oppressed with the sad

thought of the awful death that awaited me, alone in that desolate place, and my heart was full of melancholy forebodings. All hope had fled, and I was about to close my eyes in deep despair, when suddenly the distant report of the evening gun broke joyfully upon my ear. Words will not express the glad emotions of my breast, as I listened to the deep, reverberating sound, as it rolled along through the echoing valleys, until hushed in the stillness of the solitude that reigned around. I was overcome with joy—not wild, extatic joy—but a calm, holy feeling of gratitude, such as I had never experienced before, made me happy in the prospect of approaching relief and safety; and a tear stole down my haggard cheek as I caught the familiar notes of the *retreat*, that came faintly upon the breeze, as if to assure my hope. Marking well the direction of the sound, I soon sank into a refreshing sleep, regardless of my pain, now that my mental agony was in a measure abated.

With the early dawn I arose and pursued my journey. My progress was necessarily slow, owing to my crippled condition and exhausted strength, and it was towards evening when I reached the margin of a large river, down which I determined to proceed until I should intersect the road, at which point I confidentially expected to find the fort whose gun I had heard the preceeding evening. An hour's walk brought me in sight of the "flaunting stars and stripes," floating proudly over what I afterwards learned to be the pine pickets of Piccolati, on the opposite side of the river.

On arriving at the junction of the road, I found a large body of troops encamped, preparatory to their departure for Fort Drane. I was too much overcome by the intensity of my feelings to answer satisfactorily any of the many questions that were eagerly pressed upon me by the deeply sympathising and astonished group that gathered around me. I was soon conveyed to a tent, where I gave vent to my joy and gratitude in a flood of tears, while from my inmost heart went up the sincerest offering of praise and thanks that I had ever raised to the throne of mercy.

Such was the swollen and inflamed condition of my wounds that I was immediately sent across the river to Piccolati, where I was placed under the care of a surgeon, who proceeded to dress them, and as well as his facilities would allow, to administer to my relief and comfort.

On the following day I was subjected to a painful surgical operation, the pain of which exceeded all the sufferings of my past life. A rifle-ball had passed round from my breast and lodged underneath my shoulder blade, which ball it became necessary to extract in order to heal the wound. My whole arm was exceedingly swollen, and my shoulder and back in the vicinity of the wound, were inflamed to such a degree, that the slightest pressure from the surface caused the most acute pain.

I will not attempt to describe to the reader the excruciating agony which I was compelled to undergo while under the hands of the operator. Such as have suffered the pangs of "a raging



tooth" until the whole face has become swollen and inflamed, and whose eyeballs have started from their sockets as they felt the knife of the dentist rattling over their gums with as much freedom as if he were opening an oyster, or have swooned at the sudden wrench of the electric steel, and woke to consciousness with confused notions of a dislocated neck and a brief visit to the regions of torment, can form a slight idea, a faint conception of my suffering, by basing their calculations upon a just scale of proportion ; or, in other words, by the rule of simple multiplication, taking the inflamed jaw for the multiplicand, and my lacerated shoulder and back for the multiplier.

I will spare the reader the revolting scene of an army hospital, and pass over the time of my sojourn at Piccolati as hastily as possible. For many long weeks I was confined to my rude camp-bed, while my ears were filled with the imprecations and groans of the miserable tenants of that horrible abode, and not unfrequently were my eyes greeted with the unsightly spectacle of some mutilated and ghastly corpse, as it was borne unceremoniously to its grave. The conviction that I, too, would soon be conveyed to my final resting place, had settled upon my mind ; and such was my desire to undeceive my family and friends, that had there been any one among my attendants who seemed capable of sympathy with, or of commiseration for my fault, I should have made myself known to him, and relieved my conscience from the painful secret which had so long rankled in my bosom.

At length my wounds began to heal, and the intermittent fever with which I had been attacked since my arrival at Piccolati, to yield to medical treatment. As I gradually recovered my strength, I resolved, let the consequences be what they might, that so soon as I was able, I would return to my home, where I might once more enjoy the friendship and sympathy of my mother and sisters. Often, after I had sufficiently recovered to leave my room, would I totter down to the banks of the beautiful St. Johns, and seated by the water's edge, meditate upon the past, and resolve for the future. I found it impossible to trace my misfortunes to any other source than to my own rashness. My selfish jealousy had been the cause of my original despondency, and my thoughtless impetuosity of temper, which had always urged me to extremities in almost every act of my life, had plunged me into the bitter depths of misery which had succeeded. My spirit was subdued. I had fed long enough upon the husks of adversity, and like the prodigal of old, was ready and willing to direct my steps homewards, where, if I had not a father to meet and forgive me, I felt that there were those who would welcome me back to life, and without whose forgiveness life was valueless, and death tenfold more terrible.

The time had expired for which I had enlisted, and I was discharged from the service with several other volunteers from Georgia and Carolina, with whom I left Piccolati for St. Augustine, whence we took a packet to Charleston. On my arrival

at the latter place, I lost no time in procuring a passage to Philadelphia. After a very short voyage, our good brig entered the Capes, and passing up the noble Delaware with a fair wind and favoring tide, we met with no delay, and on the afternoon of the second day, Philadelphia, with her lofty towers and steeples, lay spread out before us.

I cannot describe the sensations produced in my mind, on once more beholding the familiar objects of my youth. A thousand joyous recollections were revived, and a thousand bright anticipations created, as my eyes rested upon the scenes of past pleasures. What would I not have given, could I have greeted the many familiar faces that met me on the wharf? But I had resolved first to ascertain how matters stood, before I ventured to declare myself, even to my own family. It was towards evening when I sprang upon the wharf. Nearly all the small pittance of a soldier's three month's pay was gone. I had no baggage—and with a light heart, and yet lighter pocket, I found myself once more upon my native soil, within a few days of two years after my supposed suicide.

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#### CHAPTER VIII.

My first impulse was to ascertain whether my family were still all living, and such was my anxiety to be assured that my poor old mother had not fallen a victim to my rash and wicked deception, that I was on the point of hastening to her residence, and if she was still alive, to throw myself at her feet, confess and explain all, and implore her forgiveness. But she was a firm believer in the supernatural, and entertained such a dread of ghosts and apparitions, that I was sure the reappearance of her own dear son, unless she was previously prepared for such an event, would be a greater trial than was his sudden and melancholy exit.

Almost mechanically my feet carried me to the door of my once happy home. But I dared not enter. For some time I paced up and down the side-walk in front of the house. A strange gentleman entered, and shortly after reappeared with my two sisters; a feeling of the deepest contrition sent the blood to my temples, as I noticed they were dressed in second mourning, doubtless for me. The windows of the parlor were hoisted; and as my sisters stepped into the street, I saw my mother's head thrust out—"Take your shawls, girls," said she in a voice that harrowed up a flood of tender recollections; "it will be chilly when you return." I was too much elated to hear the reply, and hastened away, leaving my sisters and their gallant in conversation with my mother, happy in the assurance



that death had not entered my home during my absence. And now a new hope revived within me, that all might yet be well.

My next anxiety was to ascertain whether Julia, for whom I now felt the tenderest regard springing up in my bosom, still survived. I soon found myself in the vicinity of her residence, and after passing to and fro before it for some time, I ventured, when no one might observe my movements, to steal a glance within. There was the little parlor, the scene of so many pleasant recollections, where I had passed so many happy hours with her whose every smile had shed a ray of joy upon my soul, and whose every tone was music to my ears—but it was desolate. Could it be possible that she was dead?—or was she worse than dead—married to another? The thought was maddening—and though I felt that I deserved no better fate, yet the uncontrolled grief which she manifested at my funeral, encouraged me to hope that there were no grounds for my latter suspicion, and that if she was still living, she would forgive and yet be mine.

With these reflections I left the spot, with the determination of again returning, at a later hour, to make further investigations. Occasionally passing the house to observe whether there was yet a light in the parlor, I continued my rambles through familiar scenes, until at length my attention was arrested by a tall gentleman, who entered the house over which I was keeping such faithful vigil. A light soon shone from the parlor window, and I approached with the hope of satisfying my curiosity on a subject which increased in interest the longer I was kept in suspense.

Stepping lightly upon the little veranda which extended along the whole front of the building, I cautiously approached the window, and looked in. A tremor ran through my whole frame, and I could almost hear the violent throbs of my heart, as I beheld, seated near the centre-table, my own angelic Julia! Lovelier far than ever, and, like my sisters, still in her mourning weeds. The gentleman whom I had seen enter, sat with his back towards me, a little distance from her, with whom she was engaged in conversation.

"Will you never," said he, "give over wasting your thoughts upon that hair-brained fellow."

My breath was suspended, as I waited for her answer.

"I beg," replied Julia, "that you will drop the subject. I have often intimated to you that my affections were not in my power to bestow, which I should think would leave you without motive for recurring to a matter which must ever remain a source of sorrow to me."

My breath came free again.

"Cruel girl!" exclaimed the exquisitely dressed spark, as he fell upon his knee—"will you never relent—will you not renounce one dead, who, when living, was unworthy of your love; and by bestowing your heart upon one who can appreciate the inestimable treasure, and whose love for you has no bounds—will you, dearest Julia—"

"Say no more, and *do* get up, Mr. Shaw."

Shaw!—I could hear no more. My first thought, when I heard that hated name, was to massacre him on the spot. But my better judgment triumphed for once, and I contented myself with compressing my clenched fists until the blood started to the surface. I could not listen longer, and I determined to break up the courtship, for that night at least.

I resolved to bring supernatural power to my aid, and if possible to bluff off my rival by haunting the premises. What horrible noise should I make that would sound ghost-like, was my next study. I recollected that several years before, when quite young, as Julia and myself were passing down Arch street, we discovered an old sailor lying drunk in the gutter. As we approached him, I remarked to her that he was dead, and that the body-snatchers would be apt to get him; on which the old fellow raised his head as well as he could, and shouted in a most lugubrious tone "John's alive! John's alive!" until we were out of hearing. There was nothing remarkable in the incident, but the exclamation afterwards became a by-word with us, and often when I had stolen upon her, I had startled her by a tap upon the shoulder, at the same time that I exclaimed in her ear, "John's alive!" I was assured that she would at once recognise my voice and our old by-word, which was only known to ourselves, and which, no doubt, she had last heard from my lips.

Mr. Shaw still refused to rise, and persisted in "doing" the impassioned lover before the mortified girl, in a truly dramatic style, while she begged and entreated him not to "act so."

"I care not," he continued, "though you frown upon me and repulse me a thousand times—I would not yield to such a rival when living, much less when dead. I'll——"

"*Do* get up, Mr. Shaw, and do not act so foolish," interrupted Julia, endeavoring to withdraw her hand, which he had grasped and was conveying to his lips.

"I will not rise from your feet—no power shall move me hence, until you promise me that——"

"John's alive!" I exclaimed in a hollow voice.

"Ugh!—what's that?" gasped the startled Shaw, springing to his feet.

"It is he!—it is his ghost!" cried the fainting girl, as she fell back in her chair with a frantic scream.

My object was attained, and I suddenly decamped, leaving the frightened couple to their reflections, while I wended my way to an obscure lodging, where I intended to remain until I could devise some plan of making myself known to my friends.

On the following day the ghost story was current among the gossips of the neighborhood. Various exaggerated accounts of the affair were in circulation, but all the old ladies agreed as to my identity, and pronounced it nothing more than right that the cruel authors of my untimely death should be visited by my spirit. I liked the turn the matter had taken, and hoped by keeping up my ghostly visits, to drive my rival from the field,



though I was not without some qualms of conscience when I thought of the distress which my scheme would necessarily inflict upon Julia, against whom I no longer felt any resentment, assured as I was of her fidelity and truth. Indeed, it required some effort to overcome my misgivings on this subject. But such was my implacable hatred of Shaw, and so strong was my desire to consummate my revenge for the suffering he had caused me, that I could not forego the opportunity thus afforded me of annoying him, even at the severe cost of her for whom I now entertained sentiments of regard, equally devoted and sincere, if not so ardent and intense as my first fond delirium of love.

Accordingly, on the following night I determined to act the ghost to perfection, and prepared to "dress for the character," by taking a sheet from my bed.

As I anticipated, I found Shaw in attendance, offering his condolence to my poor terrified Julia, and endeavoring to persuade her that it was all a hoax, attempted to be practised upon him by some of his mischievous acquaintances. After listening some time, I placed myself full before the window, and when he asked her what reason she had for thinking that it was my ghost, and she replied—"Because it said——"

"John's alive!" I exclaimed in the same hollow tone, as I strode past the window.

"There it is again!" in a faint voice from Julia, and a loud "ugh!" from Shaw, as he caught a glimpse of my retiring form, was all I had time to hear.

Suddenly depositing the sheet out of sight, I hastened from the place: but before I had turned the corner of the street, I noticed that my example had been speedily followed by Mr. Shaw.

I had succeeded too well to abandon my project, and I determined to watch my opportunity, and whenever I could do so with safety, to give them a call.

On the following night I observed a light in the parlor rather earlier than usual, and so soon as I conceived that I would be free from interruption from persons passing in the street, with my eyes and lips well-smeared with burnt cork, my face well-powdered, and my sheet as before, I stepped lightly upon the porch, and stole a look in at the window. Two or three of Julia's acquaintances were sitting with her, and the idea occurred to me that they were watching for the ghost. Though Shaw was not there, I did not like to disappoint them, and stepping slowly past the window, I exclaimed as before—"John's alive!" One universal scream came from the inmates of the parlor, and as I turned to leave, a heavy missile whizzed past me, just grazing my side, and passing through the railing in my rear, carried away two or three pieces by its force. On raising my eyes in the direction from which it came, I beheld my rival coming full tilt to meet me. What was to be done? If I attempted to escape into the street, the hue-and-cry which he might raise would certainly cause my detection. With my usual

presence of mind, I stood motionless and still, until my assailant was about to clutch me in his grasp—then dropping suddenly down, I grasped him by the ankles and tossed him, partly by main strength, and partly by his own impetus, far over my head on to the side-walk; and in less than three seconds from the moment I first discovered him, was again in the street. To remove all signs of the cork and powder was but the work of a moment, and by the time a crowd had been collected by Shaw's groans, and the screams of the women, I was mingling with the astonished and inquisitive spectators.

"Are you much hurt, sir?" inquired one of the bewildered Shaw.

"Oh, it's a ghost," gasped he with his first breath, as he rose from the pavement, against which his head and shoulders had come in rather unpleasant contact.

"Yes, indeed," said a little girl, who held a lamp in her hand, "for we all saw it, and it said 'John's alive!' as plain as anything!"

"Oh, yes, we all saw it and heard it too," exclaimed several of those standing upon the porch.

"Did you see it, sir?" I enquired very earnestly of Mr. Shaw, who stood trembling in every joint, and deadly pale.

"I was watching for it," he replied, as the crowd gathered around him, "but I did not see it until I heard it speak. On hearing it, I rose up and threw a brick-bat at it, which passed right through the shadow, but it never moved. Still thinking it might be some body, I rushed towards it, and just as I was about to take hold of it, it vanished, and I knew no more until I found myself on the bricks here, almost dead."

"They say it's very dangerous to take hold of a spirit," said a little duck-legged man, with eyes like saucers.

"To be sure it is," replied a tall, broken-nosed Irishman, "for didn't Michael McCracken git four iv his ribs broke, by tryin' to lay hould iv one that was walkin' off wid the only pair iv throuses he had in the world?"

"Is it possible!" exclaimed the little man, casting a most credulous gaze into the speaker's face.

"To be sure he did," replied the other, "for didn't Mike tell me himsilf the next mornin', whin I wint to see him, and the Docthor was puttin' things to rights wid him?"

"When did that happen?" asked one; "was it this same ghost?"

"Oh, no—this was a fortnight ago, come Saturday night, that Mike seed the ghost. It's a-bed he was, in his own house, sleepin' as harmless as a suckin' pig, whin he heard somethin' sneeze like. 'Who's there?' sis he, and he seed somethin' white at the fut iv his bed. 'I'll be betther acquainted wid ye, my lark,' sis Mike, and wid that he turned out. 'Who are ye?' sis he. 'I'm a sperit, Michael McCracken,' sis the ghost. 'The divil ye are!' sis Mike, not blavin' a word iv it. 'Whist!' sis the ghost, as he juked past him, widout touchin' the floor. But Mike had a dhrop in his head, and wasn't afeard iv the divil



himself, so he wint to lay hould iv the spirit, whin it vanished out iv his sight in a twinklin', and poor Mike know'd no more til he found himsilf sprawled out on the floor the nixt mornin', wid four iv his ribs broke, and his throuses and the very shate aff the bed was missin'."

"Mercy on us!" groaned the little man.

There were some doubts expressed by the crowd as to the genuineness of Michael's ghost; but there were too many witnesses to testify to the appearance of the one which had used Mr. Shaw so roughly, to leave any doubt upon the subject.

"It is now two years since the man drowned himself, I believe," said one.

"Yes, and this is the third time he has appeared since Miss Carson came from the country."

"There must be something wrong, or his troubled spirit would not walk the earth o' nights in this way," said the little man, who turned to each speaker, and seemed anxious to hear every word that was uttered in relation to the mysterious affair.

"It's very singular—very singular, indeed," said the wondering crowd.

Mr. Shaw made a brief examination of his bruised cranium, upon which he discovered several prominent developments that were not there before, adjusted his battered beaver as well as he could, and went limping home, perfectly satisfied that he had encountered a spirit from the other world.

Well, thought I—as I left the astonished crowd still pressing their inquiries concerning the mysterious apparition, and discussing ghost stories in general—if my discomfited rival does not now raise the siege, then he is indeed proof against ghosts.

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## CHAPTER IX.

ON the following morning the penny papers blazoned forth the full details of the Ghost-story. The affair had created a considerable sensation among the credulous and marvel loving portion of the community, and I began to fear that I was again making Philadelphia too hot for me, should I by any mischance be discovered. My vindictive spirit had been somewhat appeased by the fright I had inflicted upon them, and upon reflection, I determined to discontinue my ghostly visits, ere I should have fallen into my old error of carrying my jokes too far, if I had not done so already.

I was now extremely anxious to make myself known to Julia and my family, and seriously meditated how I should again come to life without frightening them all out of their wits. I ventured to seek an old friend and school-mate, who had in days past been my confidant, and make him the mediator between the dead and the living. I found him at his law office,

and requested a private interview with him. I declared myself, but it was not until I had narrated to him all the circumstances of my singular adventure, and recalled to his mind several matters connected with our past lives, that he seemed willing to acknowledge me; and though the hearty gripe of the hand which I gave him, when I enjoined him to secrecy to all but my family and Julia, could not but convince him that he was conversing with flesh and blood, he seemed to recoil from me as if still unconvinced, so long and firm had been his conviction of my death. After gently reproaching me for my conduct, and being cordially assured of my full repentance, he took a professional view of the matter, and consented, without fee, to become my counsellor and attorney. I desired him to prepare my mother and sisters for my reception on the following day, and to have Julia one of the party. He promised me to do so, and we parted to meet at ten in the morning.

Agreeably to appointment, I found my friend at his office, who informed me that my family were nearly frantic with joy at the news of my return, and that Julia was so exceedingly happy to learn that her John was indeed alive, and that I was ready and willing to forgive her for all the sufferings she had caused me, that she had been in a state of almost hysterical mirth ever since he had broken the matter to her.

It was a joyous meeting, when I embraced my fond old mother and affectionate sisters, who all gave vent to their overjoyed hearts in a flood of tears. Julia colored to the temples as she approached in her turn.

"John's alive!" I exclaimed as I sprang forward and impressed a kiss upon her lips.

"That's no ghost," said she, as she turned blushing away. Next came the strange gentleman whom I had seen with my sisters on the first day of my arrival. He was introduced to me as my brother-in-law. He had been married to my eldest sister only a few weeks, and was shortly to return to the south, his place of nativity.

After the first tumultuous greeting I was compelled to detail the events of my life, since my mysterious departure, which, as I proceeded to narrate the "battles, sieges, fortunes I had passed," elicited many a tear, and many an exclamation of wonder from the intensely interested and sympathising listeners. After dinner I drew Julia to the sofa, where uninterrupted, we reviewed the past and conversed seriously and rationally of the future. I found her all my heart could wish—fond, generous, and forgiving; and I regarded her as a rich treasure, the possession of which would abundantly compensate for all my past trials.

From her I learned the sad history of her own sufferings during my absence, and though the recital pained me, and caused me to execrate my past conduct, yet I could not but feel a degree of gratification at the evidence of her unalterable attachment. She had passed most of her time in the country, and had returned with my youngest sister, from Northumberland,



only a few weeks previous to my arrival in Philadelphia. Though Shaw had been importunate and annoying to her, at a time when she refused to see any company, he had lost sight of her shortly after my funeral, and had only had an opportunity of forcing his society upon her since her return from the country. "And," she concluded with a smile, "I do hope the fall he got the other night has effectually abated the ardor of his attachment."

It was evident to all that it would be impossible for me again to make Philadelphia my home, and that I would be incurring a great risk by even permitting it to be generally known that I was still living. I could not expect to make reparation to the family, the sanctity of whose vault I had violated; and should it be discovered that my suicide was only feigned, the public curiosity would be immediately excited to know whose body had been taken from the river and buried in my stead. Besides, the notoriety which my recent exploits were calculated to give me, when it should be found out that Mr. Shaw's ghost was no other than myself, would be any thing but pleasant, if it did not involve me in new difficulties.

My brother-in-law, who was a young physician, suggested that I should accompany him to Georgia, which I consented to do, on condition that Julia would make one of the party. This proposition met the approbation of my mother and sisters, and to crown my wishes Julia promptly gave her consent to our speedy marriage; and all was arranged for the consummation of our happiness. The day was appointed for our wedding, which was to be conducted with as much privacy as possible, on that day week, at which time my brother-in-law would be ready for his departure. In the mean time I kept within doors, only venturing into the street at night, and then carefully avoiding observation. I saw Julia frequently, who assured me that her family were perfectly reconciled to our union, since the explanations I had given them of my past conduct, and the assurances, which she had endorsed, of my thorough reformation.

During the intervening week Julia informed me, much to my surprise, that Mr. Shaw had recovered from his fright, and again urged his pretensions to her hand. I still entertained a desire to complete my revenge upon the presumptuous coxcomb, whose importunities it seemed no denial or entreaties could dissuade; and now an idea occurred to me, which, if I could secure the co-operation of Julia, would cap the climax of the whole affair. After some persuasion, I succeeded in inducing her to become an accomplice in the execution of my design, which, I urged, would be but a just retaliation for the annoyance he had been to me, and a fit rebuke to his pertinacity in thus pressing his suit against her known wishes. It was accordingly arranged that she should accept the gentleman's proffered hand, and appoint the following Wednesday, the day designated for our own union, for the wedding day, leaving the issue of the affair to me.

Matters being thus arranged, there were now three of us pre-

paring to sustain principal parts in the celebration of the approaching nuptials—Mr. Shaw, Julia and myself. The auspicious night drew nigh. Shaw was in ecstasies, and might be seen, arm in arm with his groomsman, sauntering up and down the street as the dusk of evening approached, almost incapable of suppressing his ineffable delight. Early in the evening, a small party of young persons were assembled, all of them the intimates of Julia and my sisters, who had invited the company; Mr. Shaw being content only to bring his groomsman.

The parson had arrived, and every thing was in readiness—but before entering the parlor, Julia assisted me to dress the ghost in a style becoming the occasion.

"There," said she, as she adjusted the bandage about my jaws, and smoothed down the folds of my long winding-sheet—"You'll do for John's alive, now." Then shaking her taper finger at me, with an arch look, as she went to join the company in the parlor, "don't you fail to be there in time now—remember, you must come when the parson says 'hold their peace.'"

"Never you fear—I'll be there. Tell sisters to scream their best, and don't let the room be too light."

"My stars! John, how horrid you do look—I'm afraid you'll frighten the parson off too, and that'll spoil all."

"No danger—he aint afraid of ghosts; but if he starts to run you must all catch hold of him."

Julia entered the parlor, and I took my position at the door, where I might, through the key-hole, observe the movements of the wedding-party. The door was left slightly ajar, and Julia took care that no one should be in the way to obstruct its opening.

Shaw was dressed in a "long-tailed blue" with large metal-buttons, brimstone-colored pants, and white satin vest; and his large soap-locks, which had just then come in fashion, were combed down over his lantern jaws, and glistened with bear's oil and pomatum, until they almost vied in lustre with his glittering buttons. He sat in a nervous fidget for some time, devouring with his great sheep's eyes my modestly attired Julia, whom he was about to lead before the parson.

Everything being in readiness, the delighted groom led forward his blushing bride. The good parson commenced the ceremony of tying the matrimonial knot, with all the accustomed solemnity, while Shaw cast upon the assemblage a look of complacent satisfaction that spoke plainer than words the joyous emotions of his heart on the eve of such an auspicious event. There was a death-like stillness in the room. The parson proceeded:

"If any have aught to say why this couple should not be united in the holy bans of wedlock, let them now speak, or forever after hold their peace——"

"I forbid the bans!" I groaned forth, in a deep sepulchral tone.



"Now, who's that?" demanded Shaw, in a voice that betrayed, at once, his rage and trepidation, as he cast his eyes fearfully over his shoulders, and amazement was depicted in every face that met his view.

"John's alive!" I exclaimed. The door flew open as if by magic, and I strode slowly into the room in my ghostly attire.

A loud scream burst from the affrighted females; Julia fell into my sister's arms, who screamed her loudest. Shaw, with the exclamation of "God preserve us!" in his mouth, fell sprawling over his terrified groomsman, who, on his "all fours," was endeavoring to make his way through the parson's legs to the door. Even those who were in the secret, shrunk into the corners, or hastened from the room, while the good parson stood with uplifted hands, the picture of astonishment and wonder.

"I come to claim my bride!" I continued.

"Wah!—oh!—ah!—ah!" shouted the little fat groomsman, almost breathless with terror.

"Don't touch it!—don't touch it, for your lives!" exclaimed Shaw, as he and his little man made their exit through the door.

Hastily divesting myself of the white sheet in which I was enveloped, and removing the powder and cork from my face, I commenced to apologize to the parson, who seemed even more than ever amazed.

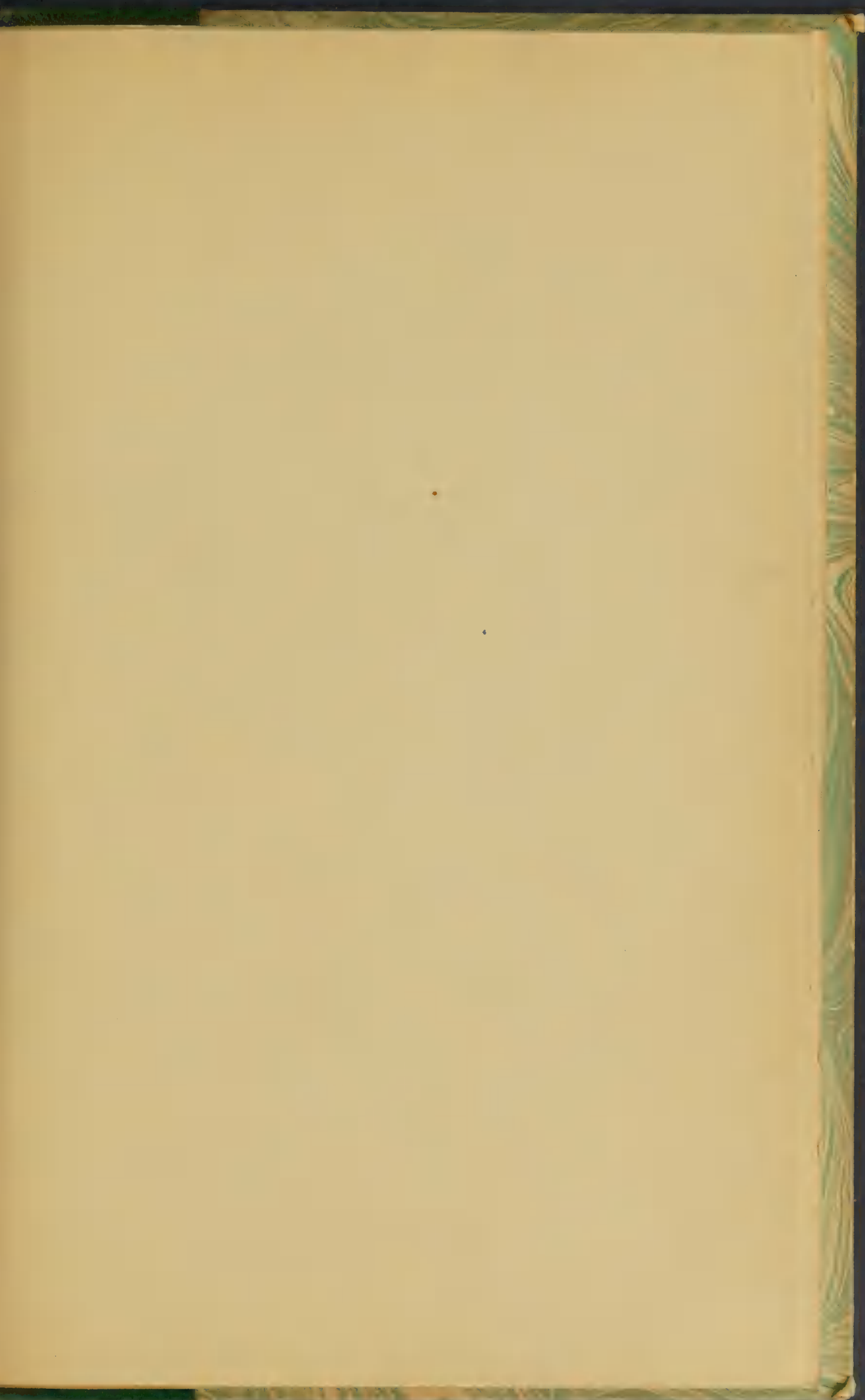
"I beg your pardon, sir, for the interruption which my strange, and rather unceremonious appearance has occasioned. I am very sorry that circumstances should have rendered such a course necessary. I would be very loth, indeed, to break up a wedding party, and rather than the affair should prove a failure, with the lady's consent, I will gladly supply the place of her absconded lover."

The old gentleman stared—but my sisters and Julia, who were his personal acquaintances, coming to my aid, matters were soon adjusted, and the face of the good parson assumed its wonted calmness and benignity of expression.

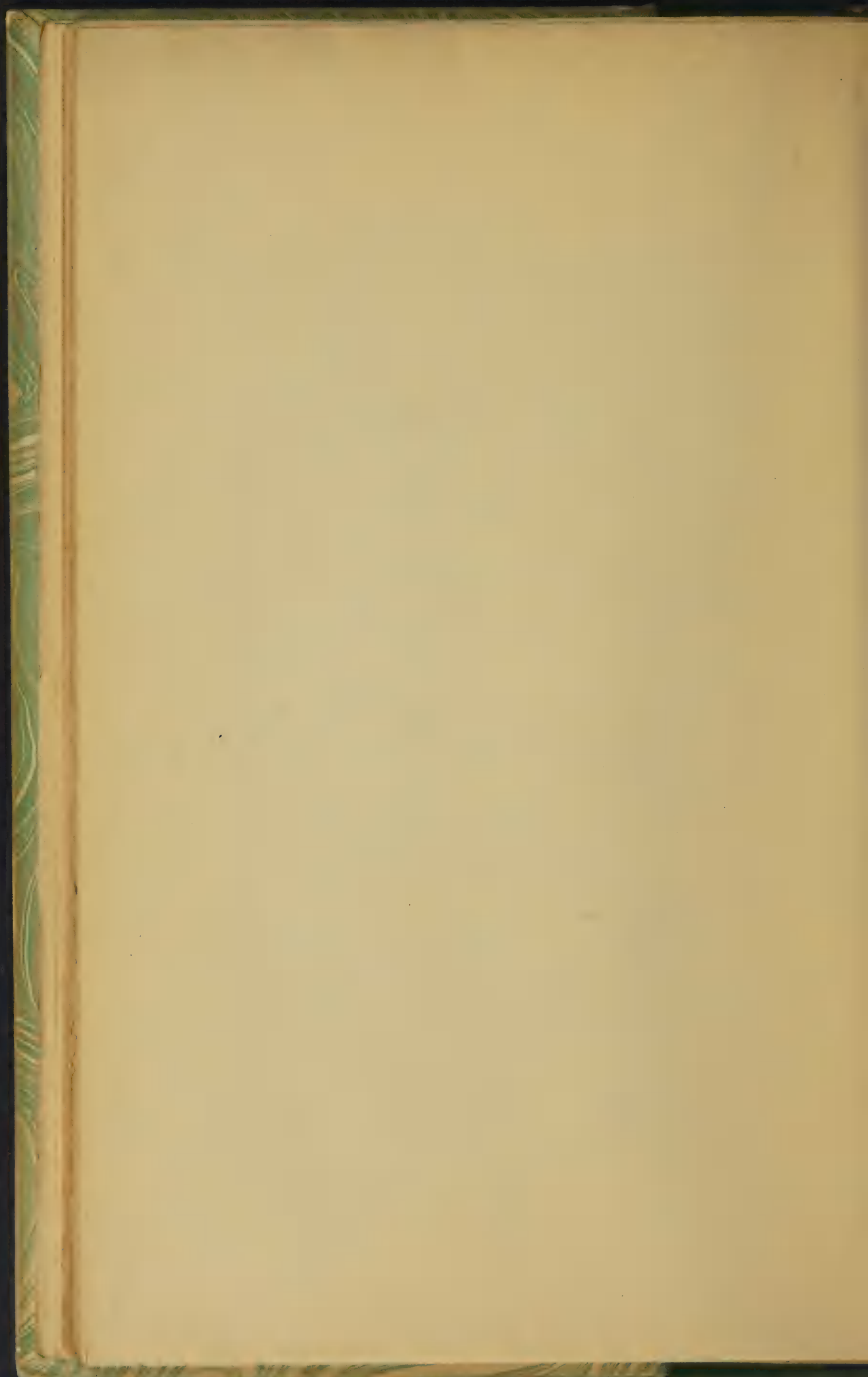
"Well," said he, with a long breath, "young people are full of their tricks, but I never expected to be called upon to marry a ghost."

The license being produced, the ceremony proceeded without further interruption, and John Smith and Julia Carson, were duly pronounced man and wife. Shaw left the city for parts unknown that very night, having discovered that a trick had been played off upon him; and with my happy bride, in company with my brother and sister, I took my departure on the following morning for the sunny South, where I am now settled, after all my hardships and adventures, the happiest—

JOHN ALIVE!

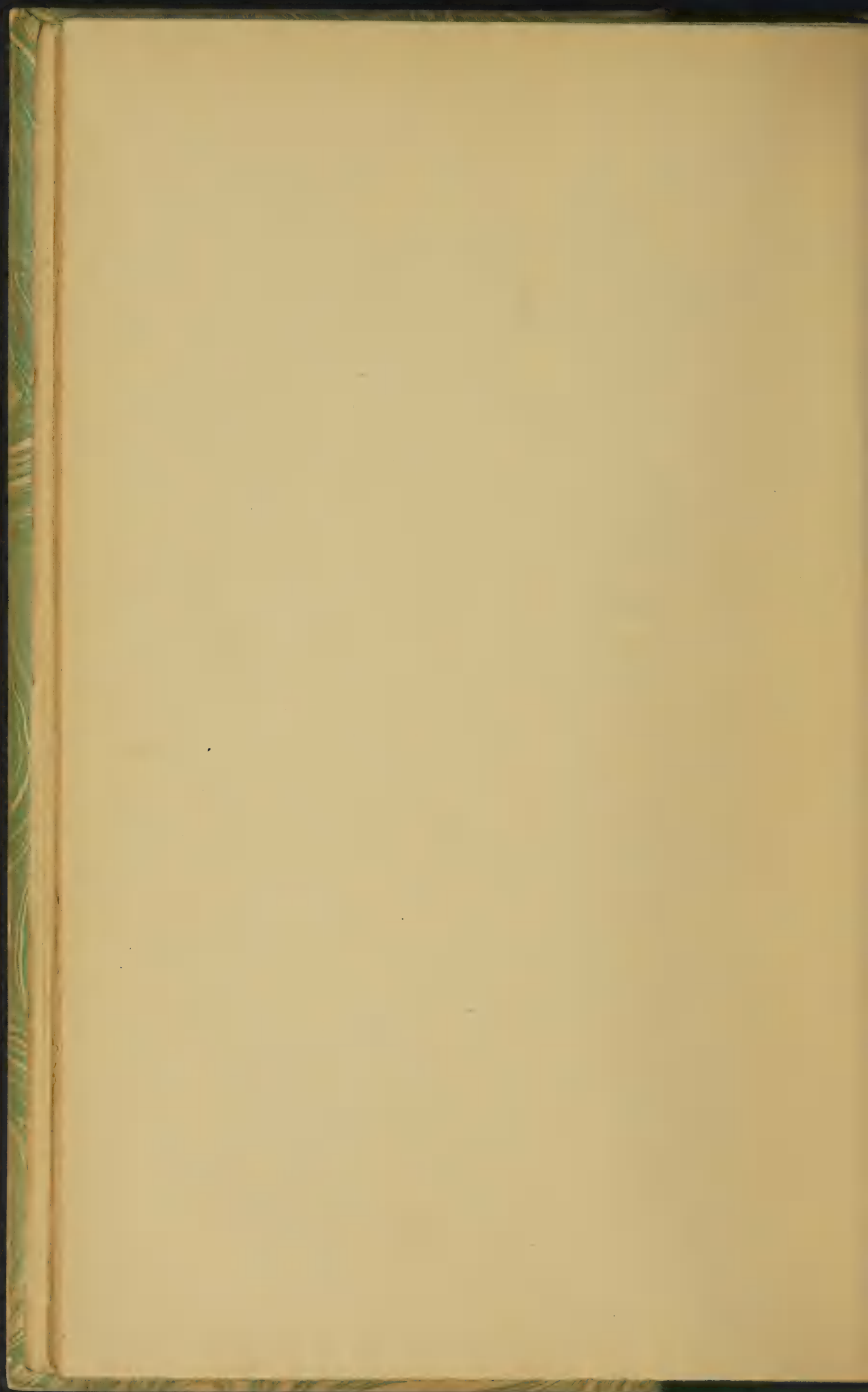












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